

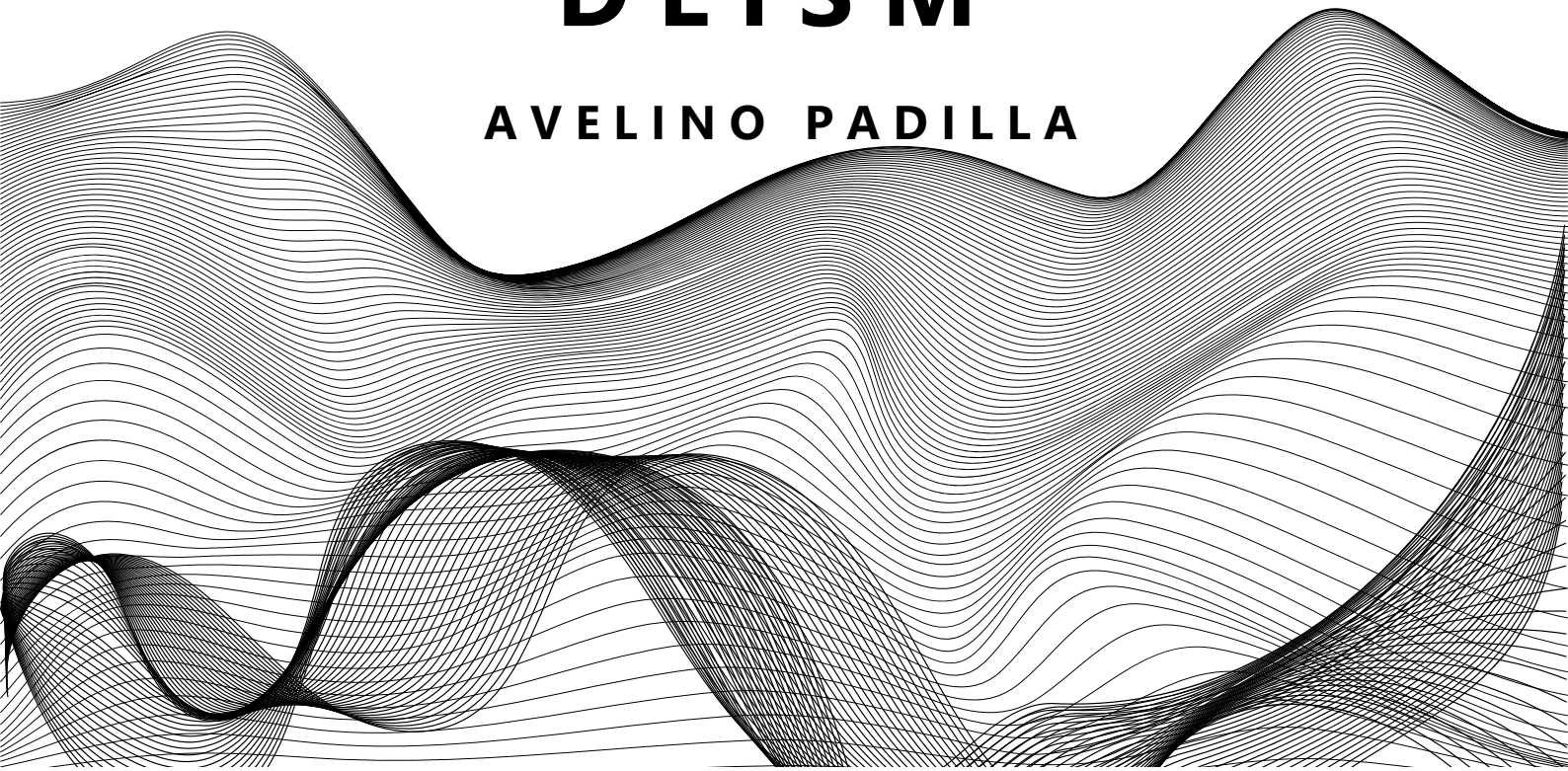
JOURNEY INTO DEISM



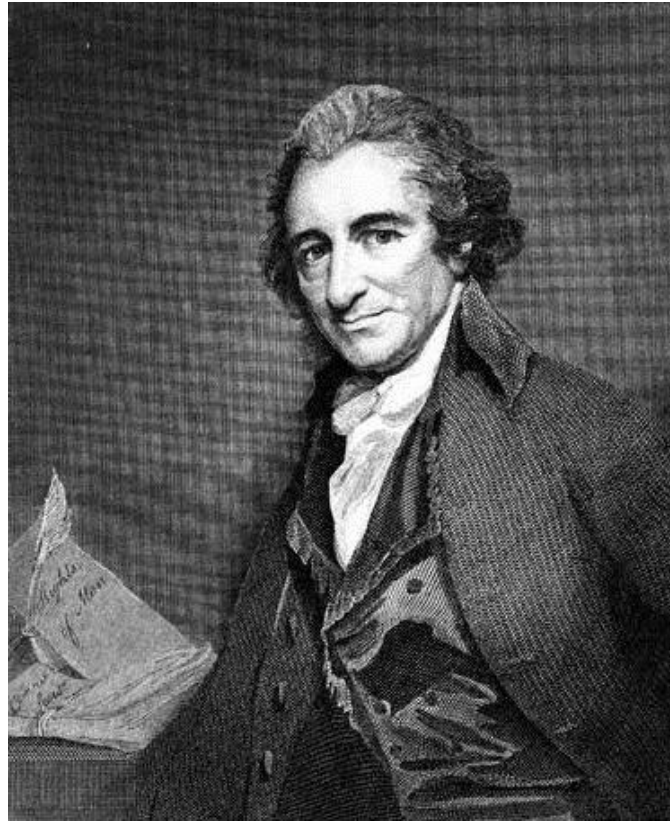
AVELINO PADILLA

JOURNEY INTO DEISM

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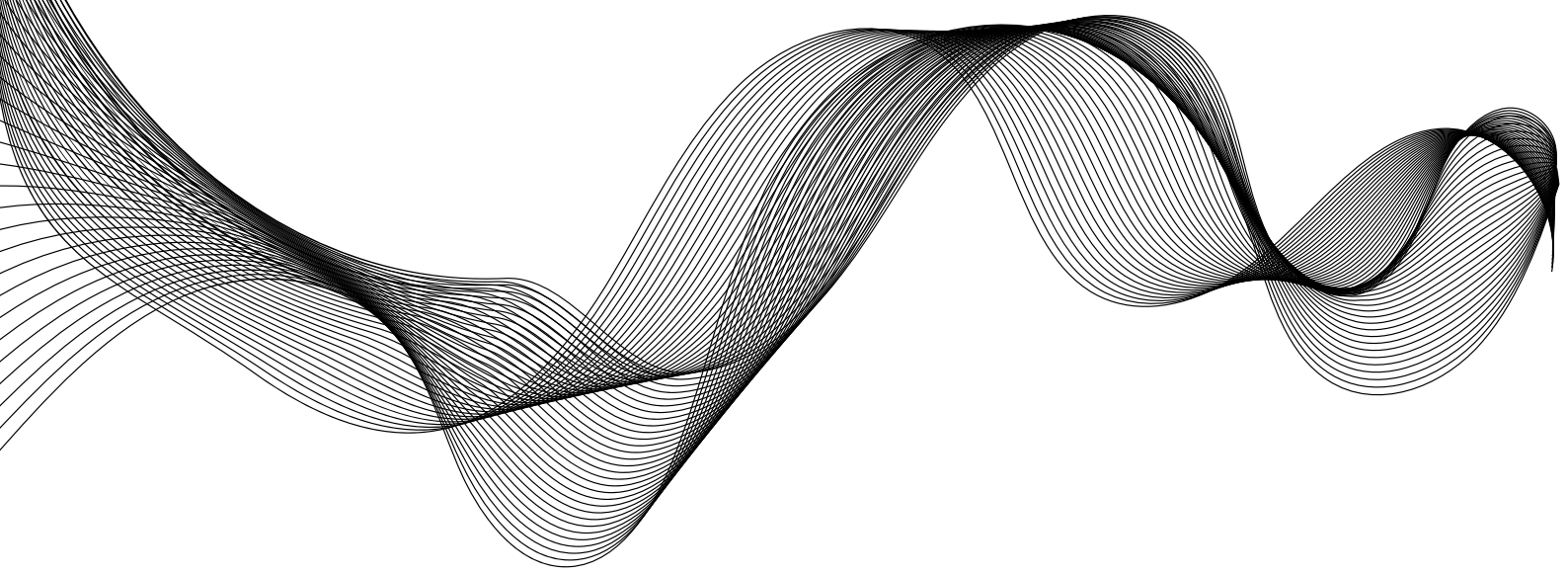
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Thomas Paine

“The religion of humanity is the only religion that is universally acceptable.”

*Thomas Paine was a key figure in the promotion of Deism during the Enlightenment. His influential works, particularly *The Age of Reason*, argued for a rational understanding of religion, emphasizing reason and scientific inquiry over organized religion and dogma. Paine challenged traditional beliefs, advocating for the idea that morality and ethics could be derived from nature and reason rather than scripture. His writings helped popularize Deistic thought in America and Europe, encouraging individuals to seek their understanding of God through observation and rationality, thus laying the groundwork for religious tolerance and freedom of thought.*



Christianity: An Insidious Deception

Christianity's foundational teaching is the fabricated doctrine of original sin. It is the bedrock of all subsequent doctrines invented by people of that religion. This belief began to emerge in the 3rd century, but only became fully formed with the writings of Augustine of Hippo (354–430 AD), who was the first author to use the phrase "original sin." It was then officially implemented by the Catholic Church and eventually adopted by Protestantism. Without the doctrine of original sin, there would be no need for a doctrine of salvation and everything else that comes after and in between. There will be no need to fabricate a story where God impregnates a virgin for Him to be born as human to sacrifice Himself to Himself and save humanity from Himself eventually.

Christianity's doctrines are nothing but a convoluted mess of intricately woven teachings designed to adrenalize human fear to ensnare their conscience with religiously crafted authoritative words extracted from a book inappropriately labeled as "The Word of God."

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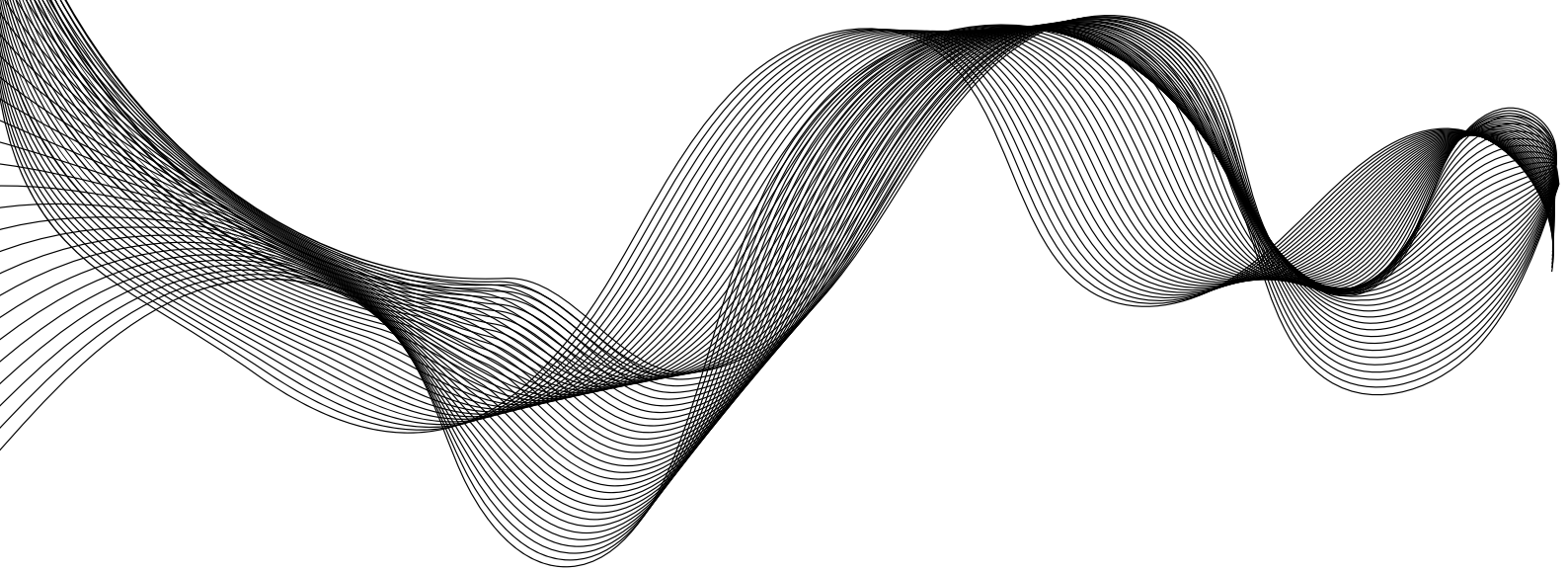
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Acknowledgements:

To my facebook friends and critics:

I extend a most profound appreciation to all who have shared invaluable thoughts that became materials to the creation of this book. I treasure the fact that many did not hold back their agitated emotions in giving their contrary opinions to some of the pronouncements I made.

Your insights, comments, and critiques have greatly helped me in refining the thoughts and assertions propounded in this book. May we continue to intelligently contend for that which we believe to be reasonable and true regardless of what others may think otherwise.



INTRODUCTION

This book is about a journey -- a historical and philosophical evolution that led the author from the teachings of Christianity to the broader path of Deism. While countless others have embarked on similar journeys, the author believes this story will resonate with those who have questioned their faith or sought deeper meaning in their spiritual lives. A story almost similar to this could be anyone's journey to which the author is thankful for having the privilege to write.

I was a pastor for several years as well as a Bible School teacher and a denominational leader. I have authored three books on Christian eschatology and have participated in intellectual discussions about faith, doctrines, and everything in between. I had graduate-level studies in England in 1986 along with other Asian pastors and have visited churches there including the ones founded by John Wesley and Charles Spurgeon. My leap into deism was rooted in my desire for a better understanding of the Christian faith, which I progressively found to be full of fables, myths, errors, and contradictions. As I broadened my studies to include resources outside of Christianity, I discovered that similar accounts of creation, mythical personalities, miracles, etc., are also found in other religions, many pre-dating

Christianity. The characters' names and places may have changed but the storylines are almost the same.

The deciding factor came when I delved into the authorship of the books of the Bible, beginning from the New Testament. Beyond any shadow of a doubt, I concluded with others that the authors we know were not the real writers of the Bible.

We are taught that the New Testament was written in Greek which, at that time, was the language of privilege even for the Roman rulers. Ordinary Jews like the apostles were conversant in Aramaic, but not in Greek. More so, they were illiterate even in their language, meaning, they could neither read nor write even in Aramaic or Hebrew. Forget Mark and Luke, but how could Matthew and John write such long gospels in Greek?

Mark and Luke were not eyewitnesses as they seem to appear in the gospels; they were just babies when Jesus lived and preached. They have not been with, or seen, Jesus in any way. At most, they may have heard of the story of Jesus from their mentor Paul, who himself, has not spent a single day with Jesus. Considering this information, the gospel stories now appear to me as fabrications, an insidious fakery resorted to to invent a new religion.

Popular Christian history, invented or not, tells us that the apostles were persecuted, banished, or voluntarily left Israel to go to places like North Africa and India.

Different claims of their sojourns include places like Britain, India, Burma, and Iran. Such stories will further question their ability, and opportunity, to write in Greek.

To my knowledge, even artificial intelligence can not create a new teaching as it will just rewrite from already available information on the internet. With all the amenities known to man, writers will tell of their struggles and challenges, their difficulties, and all sorts of reasons why writing is not a job for everyone. How much more for illiterates writing in a language that is not their own?

As I also question the reality of Jesus' existence "as presented in the gospels." The gospel narratives are pegged to some real historical events and personalities to make them appear real but, just like any felonious act, no crime is without any proof left behind. Such are the weaknesses of the gospel narratives; the fantastic fabrications will be the very proofs to expose the fraud.

I have to credit the revered deist Thomas Paine and the Stoic philosophers especially Marcus Aurelius for inspiring me to write and I would encourage everyone to get a hold of the books, "The Age of Reason" and "Meditations". It will be a spiritual and intellectual journey like no other.

Read on and find out many details wherein, when brought out, and reason prevails, will make many understand why many "intellectuals" are leaving Christianity.

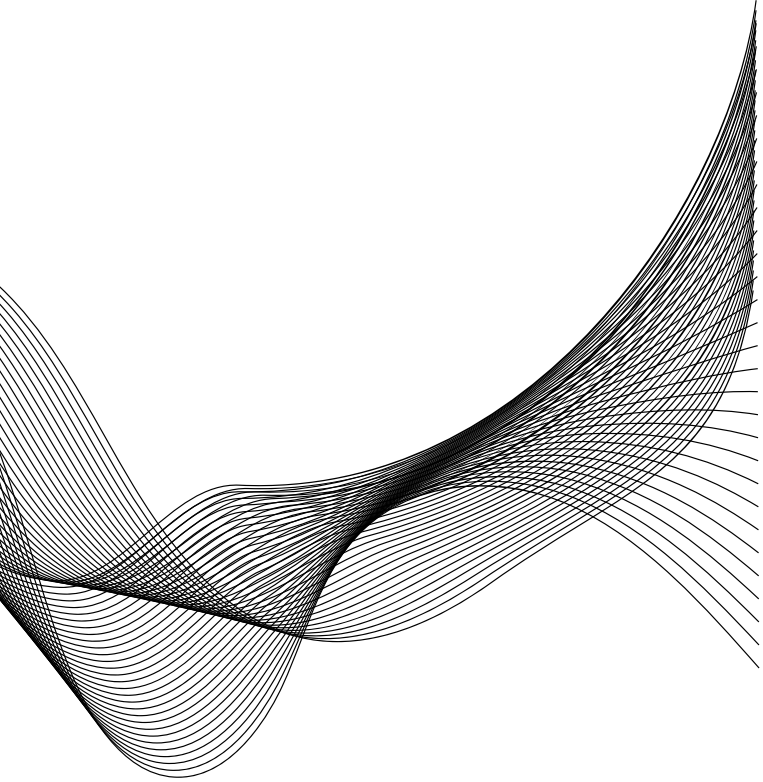


Elihu Palmer

Known for his significant contributions to modern Deism, particularly through his writings and philosophical discussions that bridge classical Deistic beliefs with contemporary thought.

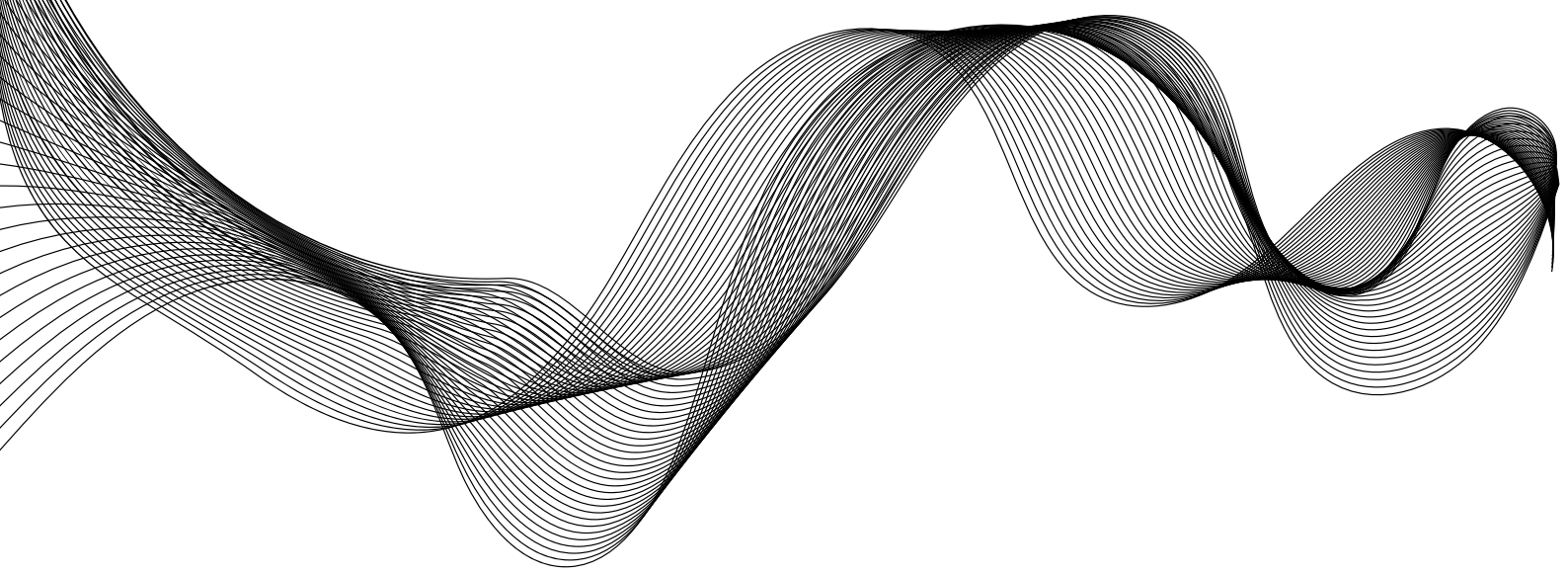
He emphasized reason, natural laws, and a personal connection to a Creator, encouraging individuals to seek spiritual understanding without relying on organized religion.

His work, including books and essays, provided a clear, accessible approach to Deistic philosophy, inspiring many to explore a more rational, nature-focused spirituality.



PART ONE: THE RELIGIONS OF HISTORY

Being mostly born into and heirs of their religions, Christians, including pastors and theologians of modern days either have not really read the Bible or have not done so with the intent to understand; rather, they read books that uphold their sectarian dogmas. Most likely, they were swamped with doctrine-specific theological books in their seminaries leaving no time for them to read the Bible with open minds but do so with the preconceived biases or previously held prejudices of their religions. The conflicts are rarely about the existence of God or His nature but rather, in the different doctrinal concepts that religions hold about their God. It's a case of putting the wagon before the horse. Theologians study their doctrines and side-tracked God in the process.



ONE: THE GODS THAT MAN MADE

The only constant in the universe is/are the unchanging natural laws. These laws reflect the order and wondrous intentions, the wisdom, and the providence of God. The mechanisms or activities of nature show a universe that is alive, responsive, constantly moving, reproducing, sustaining, evolving, full of energy, and life-giving. Except in the area of emotional anthropomorphism (man-like emotions), all the characteristics of the gods of religions can be observed to be possessed by the universe/nature.

The creation story in Genesis presents God saying, “Let US make man in OUR image...”. A closer look at this suggests that Elohim spoke to a plurality of undefined and unknown beings collectively called “Elohim”. They, together, are the active force in speaking and creating.

Who was writing? Did the Elohim assign one from among them to write? Or who among men has witnessed the Creator during the time of creation? Who was able to hear and record the conversation of the Elohim when nothing and no one existed except the Creator?

It is clear in the story that what was written was not dictated to anyone, so we have to accede to the idea of inspiration. However, we understand that inspiration is not a word-for-word dictation of something. The best definition we can think of is that somebody's mind is stimulated by something, after which a theory or idea is created. In the end, it was the human mind that created that thought which was eventually written. The creation story in Genesis originated from man.

The same idea is true in every religion. The words of the gods that came to be known are nothing but the products of human imagination. These imaginations were probably verbalized, discussed, argued upon, refined, propagated and eventually written down. Over time, these literary works gained importance beyond the intent of their creators, especially when they were introduced, often by force, as sacred texts handed down by gods through inspiration and or dictation, and came to be known as the word of the gods.

Across the world, gods are often portrayed with the positive emotions of love, mercy, kindness, forgiving, etc., and that is good. However, those gods are also described as jealous, angry, calculating, cruel, tribal, sectarian, biased, and genocidal. These gods become scary when they are portrayed as infinitely unforgiving, and punish in eternal fire those who don't worship them.

The larger issue lies not in the physical anthropomorphisms created but in the realm of emotions. Subconsciously, people often disregard the physical forms in which their gods are portrayed and become more focused on the emotions attributed to them. Too often, the *literary nature* of the Bible or any other sacred text is ignored, downplayed, or neglected. The strong assertion that such writings are sacred, as God's Word, immediately serves as a stern warning to anyone questioning them, or they will suffer the consequences. These sacred writings often take the place of the gods themselves, alive and active, punishing anyone who dares to doubt and challenge their authority.

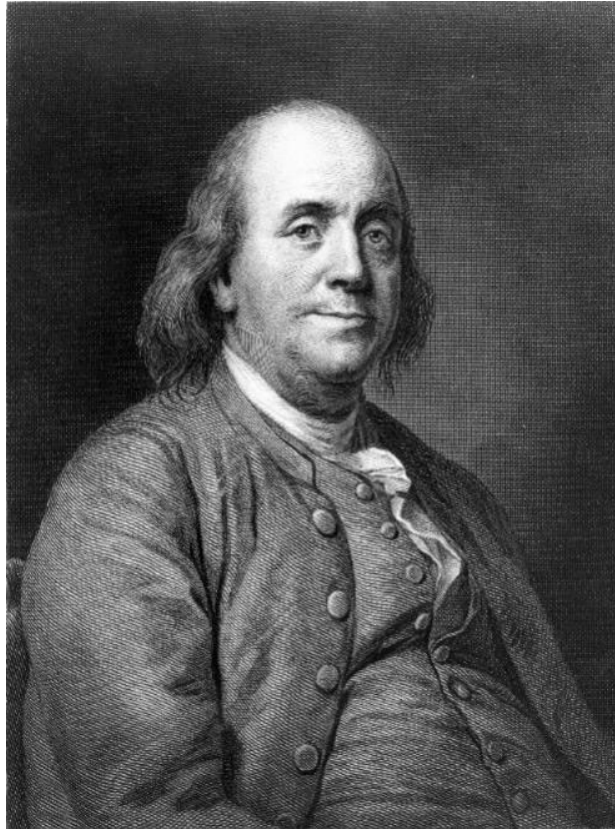
Regardless of the measure of authority attributed to such writings, the undeniable truth is that human minds were responsible for the thinking, processing, refining and ultimately creating them. It was man's language, culture, circumstances, education, abilities, resources, resourcefulness, emotions, ideas, philosophies, etc., that eventually defined the religions that came out of such beliefs. The literatures were all man-made.

Anthropomorphism is the art of ascribing human qualities, characters, and emotions to inanimate or other-worldly beings. This truth is also buried in the literary forests created to hide the real picture – that God, the Creator, is unknown and unknowable. Even the best portrayal of the Creator in the Bible is insufficient to come out with a definitive description of the one who gave no name.

Unfortunately, this practice of writing with emotional anthropomorphism has become the biggest obstacle to discovering the reality of the Creator. To many, it has become an “off-limits area” for meaningful discussion or dialogue forgetting the fact that these anthropomorphisms were just products of imagination in the first place. The writers have masterfully embedded in their literatures such warnings that it becomes so scary to even think of formulating a self-understanding of such texts. This situation is magnified several times when authorities of both clergy and governments find it convenient to use such sacred literature for selfish gains. In Christendom, this thing was played to the hilt during the Dark Ages when it was made a crime to read the Bible. Other religions have done the same.

Our closest and best representation of the Creator is creation itself. It is something we can see, feel, hear, taste, and smell. Through history and science, we can even observe some of its transformations, changes, and alterations. Though non-verbal as far as man’s language is concerned, nature speaks to humankind loudly in many ways. It can even clearly react if its “natural state” is unnaturally tasked to act or respond.

Creation responds not because it has emotions or feelings; rather, it has properties that naturally reacts consistent to its composition. It reacts accordingly in relation to the changes or forces that it is subjected to. The interplay of earth’s substances, both visible and invisible, creates the moods that came to be interpreted as evil or good.

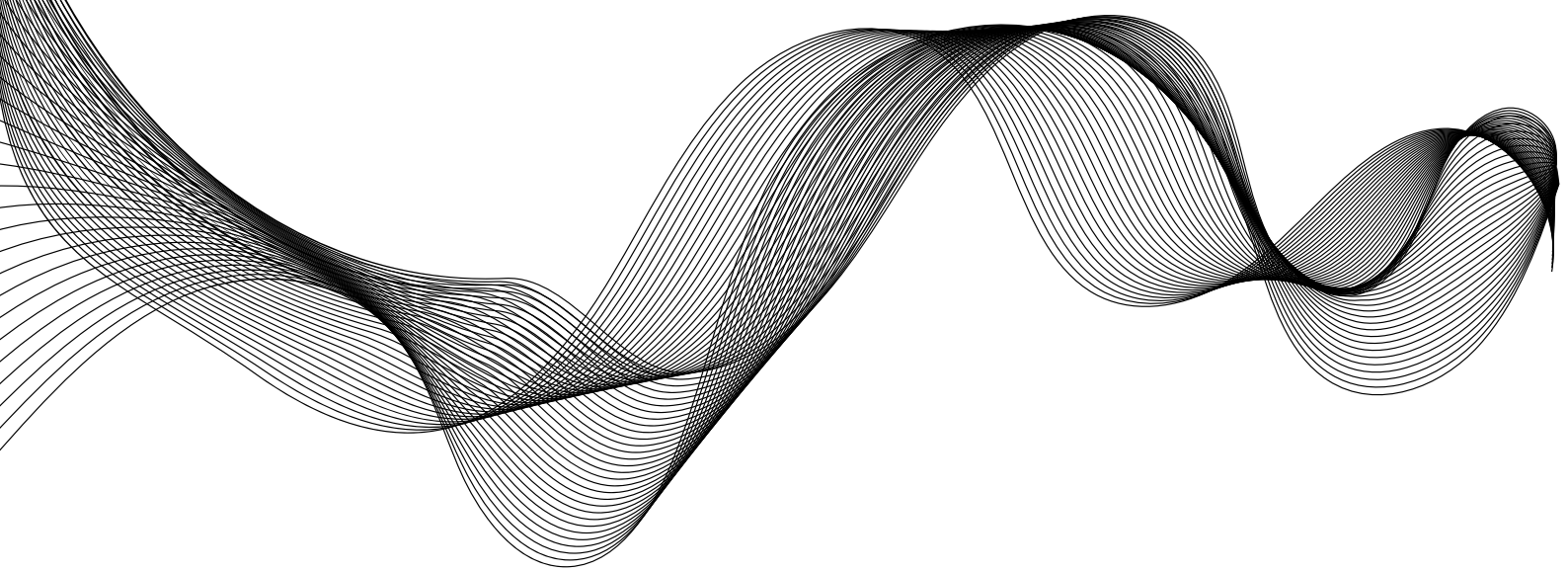


Benjamin Franklin

“Man will ultimately be governed by God and by reason.”

Benjamin Franklin was instrumental in promoting Deistic ideas in America, advocating for a belief in God based on reason, observation of nature, and moral principles rather than religious dogma. Through his writings, Franklin encouraged values like honesty, hard work, and humility, aligning with Deistic beliefs that emphasized personal virtue and rational thought.

His contributions helped shape a culture of religious tolerance and individual freedom, laying a foundation for American Enlightenment ideals and inspiring others to seek truth independently.



TWO: THE BIBLICAL GOD OF TERROR

What does it mean to “fear” God
as defined by Christian apologists?

“When the Bible refers to the “fear of the Lord,”
It means having a deep respect, reverence
and awe for God’s power and authority.”

Without Christian apologists -- “The terror of God is
exactly what it means: TERROR. Exodus 20:5 -- “I the
Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the
fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth
generation of them that hate me.”

Now, that is clearly from God, no apologists needed.

Many things are done to men that are horrific,
unbelievably cruel, and bring about great fear. But they
fade into insignificance compared to the terror of God as
preached by religion, that is, punishment in eternal
hellfire. When the terror of God grips the heart of man,
there is no end – literally.”

Be Very Afraid... or Be Free!

Have you been terrorized by God? Or terrorized by men pretending to speak on behalf of God? Or terrorized by a book erroneously labeled as The Word of God?

Your answer to these questions will determine if you continue to be in fear or be free.

Though I've read parts of the Bible many times in my Christian years, I never questioned the morality being inculcated in my mind while reading stories of genocide, many commanded or done by the God of the Bible Himself. In my mind, such genocide is okay since it was God Himself who commanded it. The theology of God's sovereignty was so embedded in my being that I was practically numbed to feel the immorality of such events. In my mind, it was okay for God to kill whoever He wanted since He is not accountable to anyone anyway.

Without question, the Bible glorifies genocide and, as a result, teaches immoral lessons. Genocide, the wholesale destruction and mass murder of an entire tribe is wrong by most people's standards. However, Jews, Muslims and Christians alike often do not question it, as they typically justify such actions with the belief that God is simply killing His enemies.

So, why is there confusion about the character of God? Why is the God of the Bible benevolent at times and then a terror in other circumstances?

THE YAHWEH - EL ELYON CONTROVERSY

Why do Religious conflicts exist?

Unknown to most Christians, the authorship of the Pentateuch is questioned by scholars for various reasons. Chief among them is the fact that Moses could not have written these texts as the Hebrew alphabet did not yet exist at the time he was supposed to have lived.

So, who wrote the Pentateuch? Scholars have identified four distinct strands or sources of the books by analyzing variations in language, narrative style, and other textual elements. One can observe these different sources when comparing similar biblical stories. For instance, the Creation myth of Genesis 1:1 depicts God as Elohim or El Elyon creating the world, while Genesis 2:5–25 presents Yahweh as the creator. These two Creation accounts differ from each other on both substance and style.

For this discussion, I will only include the use of the Hebrew names Yahweh and El Elyon. Why are there two names for God when supposedly there is only one God of Israel as popularly believed? Why are there so many verses that call God Yahweh and, to a lesser extent, El Elyon?

The four sources or strands are called documents J, E, D, & P, which stand for Jahwist or Yahwist, Elohist, Deuteronomist, and Priestly. The J documents refer to God as Yahweh, and the Elohist documents refer to God with the prefix El (Elohim, El Elyon,). The P is from

priestly sources and concerns rituals and sacrifices. The D documents, or deuteronomist (meaning authors) are so called because they were a collection of laws believed to have been written by many.

Religious friction is nothing new. From the very beginning of Judaism, there have been fundamental disagreements, such as what should be the name of God - Yahweh or El Elyon? Along with the names come the concepts and characters built around those names. The keen Bible reader is puzzled by the different portrayals of God in the Bible - one, as all loving and merciful, and, two, as cruel, judgmental, and even genocidal.

Even today, the different concepts of God baffle many. Why is the Calvinist concept of God so different from others? And why is God so cruel that He has decided to send some people to hell even before they were born? While the conflicts have developed through the ages into many forms and names, the main differences are the concepts about God.

As a Deist, I believe in One and Only One God, but I also recognize that there are so many concepts forwarded by men of philosophy and religion. I don't have a proper name for God except that I adore Him as the creator of the Universe. My belief is best described as Pandeism - which I define briefly as God is the creator of the Universe (and became the Universe Himself) which He set in autopilot that He does not need to "personally"

intervene anymore. Instead, He operates through the laws and processes of nature.

So, in the beginning of Judaism, two schools of thought emerged - which modern scholars call Yahwist and the Elohist. They could have been known by different words then, like maybe Pharisees and Sadducees during the time of Jesus. Today they could be the fundamentalists and liberals of any religion.

As religions progressed worldwide, there have always been divisions due to differences of concepts about God. The conflicts are rarely about the existence of God but, rather, in the different concepts that religions hold about their God. The Baptists, Pentecostals, Unitarians, Catholics, etc of today do not really argue whether God exists or not, but their divisions are on the differences in their concepts about how God relates with humanity. Will God send people to eternal hell, or will He bring everyone to heaven anyway? On what conditions will humans be brought to their eternal destination?

Two very distinct concepts of how God relates to humans in this life and the hereafter have emerged. On one side is a God of love, mercy, and forgiveness, and on the other is the exact opposite. Is Yahweh the name of the God that is cruel, jealous, judgmental, and narcissistic...or is he El Elyon, the God that is loving, merciful, and just? Again, the contention is not about two different Gods, but two different concepts of the same God.

Yahweh or YHWH was the Canaanite war and weather god who was adopted by the Israelites who settled in the Northern parts of Israel as their tribal god. The Israelites adopted Yahweh because it justified Moses' plan to invade Canaan and take the land of Canaan by violence and the sword.

The Yahwists depicted God in anthropomorphic language, in other words, Jehovah is portrayed as a "real" god who is doing very human things, "anthropomorphic" – having a human body and emotions. The Yahwist depicts his god repenting, relenting, grieving, and raging with anger on numerous incidents.

El Elyon was depicted as the head god of the Canaanite pantheon. El Elyon was superior to Yahweh. The Elohist says that God is without form (Deuteronomy 4:12); no image can be formed of him, and he only communicates to mortals as a formless voice from the heavens. This is the god that many new spiritual movements, like deism, are teaching: a god without body, parts, or passions!

Yahweh was only an inferior local tribal god to whom the nation of Israel was assigned. Yahweh's status, however, increased as the Israelites became more powerful in the Levant area. (roughly corresponding to modern-day Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and certain adjacent areas.

It would be helpful for readers to know that the concepts of El Elyon and Yahweh came from two groups of Jews -- one from the Jews of the dispersion and settled in the

northern parts of Palestine upon their return. The others are Jews who were not exiled and settled mostly in Judah and around Jerusalem. The Jews of the dispersion who suffered in foreign lands came back to Palestine and adopted Yahweh as the name of their God. Understandably, they want their God to “avenge” the cruelty they suffered in foreign lands, shaping their concept of God as vengeful.

For me, the controversy is not about a competition of two different gods, but a competition of human concepts about how God deals with humanity. Whether we like it or not, the three Abrahamic religions and Christian sects worship only one God, but the way this one God is regarded or looked up to or worshiped is very much dependent on the concept of its adherents. (For emphasis, between the Baptists, the Pentecostals, and the Catholics is the same God but the difference is their concepts about how this God operates. In the Old Testament God as Yahweh is cruel, judgmental, and narcissistic, but he is also El Elyon, the loving and merciful God. One God but two concepts created by adherents. In the end, each one is to decide which concept of God he chooses.

The ongoing (2023-2024) genocidal mission of Zionist Israel against the Palestinians somehow reflects the Yahwist mentality of Zionist Jews. Against world opinion, Israel waged a campaign of genocide against Palestinians. The Christian acceptance of the “Chosen People” label for the Jews largely made them support Israel blindly.

When Jews go to war, they don't seek to convert; they kill and annihilate. It has been their way since Biblical times.

The Old Testament glorifies genocide and similar mass murders. The reason why this is glorification is that these genocide commandments are given by either God himself or by characters taking direct orders from God (Moses, Joshua, etc). In the narrative of the Bible, these characters (both God and his direct followers) are portrayed as moral and just and especially justified in their attempts at genocide. They are regarded as heroes of the faith. A person committing genocide with no regrets, and celebrating it, implies the loss of any moral standard. This should be problematic for Christians as such actions contradict many of their core values of love and peace.

The general command to genocide is articulated in Deuteronomy 20:16-17 -- "However, in the cities of the nations the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, do not leave alive anything that breathes. Completely destroy them—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites.

The genocide of the Amaleks (1 Samuel 15:3) No less than Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu quoted the verse and eventually became the battle cry of Israeli soldiers going to war. "Now go, attack the Amalekites and destroy all that belongs to them. Do not spare them;

put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.”

Conducting genocide is not just an Old Testament reality for Israel; it is their dictum when going to war even today. And there's more coming if Bible prophecy is true as recorded in the most violent book of the Bible. The Book of Revelation is full of imagery of wars, genocides, and destruction. It describes the Apocalypse, the last judgment of all the nations and people by God, which includes plagues, wars, and economic collapse.

Accept it or not, most Christians, including pastors, have not really read the Bible with the intent to understand. If the Bible could really be comprehended, there should have been no differences in understanding. The diversity of interpretations and understanding serves as a clear proof to the fact that the Bible is incoherent. It, then was not inspired by God because God is not the author of confusion. Pastors who proclaim that the Bible is inerrant do so by just echoing standard institutional declarations without well-informed basis. Most likely, they have not read the Bible with sensible and logical minds.

For whatever reason such verses got into the Bible is beyond me; they are repulsive and unacceptable to a book that is called the Word of God. They present God Himself as the personification of all the evils we want to avoid. If man should be true to his better judgment, he should get rid of all such verses to make the Bible, at the very least, more honorable.

Agree, it's a tough call to say that there are immoral Bible verses but I definitely lack a better word to call them. Culled from the NIV, the following list is a sampling of repulsive Bible verses most of which are ignored by Christians. Shame on the pastors who are aware of these verses but chose to remain silent anyway.

1. Deuteronomy 22:28-29 (Rape a beautiful lady and be her husband, eh!) *If a man happens to meet a virgin who is not pledged to be married and rapes her and they are discovered, he shall pay her father fifty shekels of silver. He must marry the young woman, for he has violated her. He can never divorce her as long as he lives."*

2. Deuteronomy 17:12 (Don't question your pastors.) *"Anyone who shows contempt for the judge or for the priest who stands ministering there to the Lord your God is to be put to death. You must purge the evil from Israel."*

3. Mark 9:43-47 (I haven't seen anyone do this. Either everyone is so good or everyone is a liar.) *"If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell."*

4. (Leviticus 21:18-21 (Show no mercy to the ones who needed it most)

“No man who has any defect may come near: no man who is blind or lame, disfigured or deformed; no man with a crippled foot or hand, or who is a hunchback or a dwarf, or who has any eye defect, or who has festering or running sores or damaged testicles. No descendant of Aaron the priest who has any defect is to come near to present the food offerings to the Lord. He has a defect; he must not come near to offer the food of his God.”

5. Deuteronomy 22: 20-21 (Why do women have to prove their virginity and not men also?) *“If, however, the charge is true and no proof of the young woman’s virginity can be found, she shall be brought to the door of her father’s house and there the men of her town shall stone her to death. She has done an outrageous thing in Israel by being promiscuous while still in her father’s house. You must purge the evil from among you.”*

6. Leviticus 26:27-30 (Ahh, the God of gentle persuasion speaks)

“If in spite of this you still do not listen to me but continue to be hostile toward me, then in my anger I will be hostile toward you, and I myself will punish you for your sins seven times over. You will eat the flesh of your sons and the flesh of your daughters. I will destroy your high places, cut down your incense altars, and pile your dead bodies on the lifeless forms of your idols, and I will abhor you.”

7. Matthew 10:34-36 (The God of peace makes families fight)

“Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn “a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.”

8. (Matthew 5:38-42 (Be good to the evildoer?))

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.”

This passage feels like it has a good twist. If someone steals something from you, you should hand over something else too. It's like a steal-one-get-one offer. Either way, a good way to test this would be to steal something from a Christian and see if you get even more out of it.

9. Genesis 19:8 (Men are protected, but not women?)

“Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don’t do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof.”

10. 2 Kings 2:23-24 (Do not taunt a bald preacher, especially the short-tempered, which are many)

“From there Elisha went up to Bethel. As he was walking along the road, some boys came out of the town and jeered at him. “Get out of here, baldy!” they said. “Get out of here, baldy!” He turned around, looked at them, and called down a curse on them in the name of the Lord. Then two bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of the boys.”

11. The man after God’s own heart was a murderer, just for the fun of it. 200 foreskins for a dowry? Can you believe it? 1 Samuel 18:27 --

“David took his men with him and went out and killed two hundred Philistines and brought back their foreskins. They counted out the full number to the king so that David might become the king’s son-in-law. Then Saul gave him his daughter Michal in marriage.”

12. Hosea 13:16 --

“The people of Samaria must bear their guilt because they have rebelled against their God. They will fall by the sword; their little ones will be dashed to the ground, their pregnant women ripped open.”

13. What is the message of Luke chapter 19:27? --
Bloodthirsty God.

“But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.”

Kings are supposed to be benevolent or magnanimous toward their defeated enemies - but not the God of the Bible.

14. Isaiah 13:15-18 (Cruelty abounds in the Bible) *“Whoever is captured will be thrust through; all who are caught will fall by the sword. Their infants will be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses will be looted and their wives violated.”*

15. Exodus 32:27-28 (Massacres are solutions?)
“Then he said to them, ‘This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: ‘Each man strap a sword to his side. Go back and forth through the camp from one end to the other, each killing his brother and friend and neighbor.’” The Levites did as Moses commanded, and that day about three thousand of the people died.”

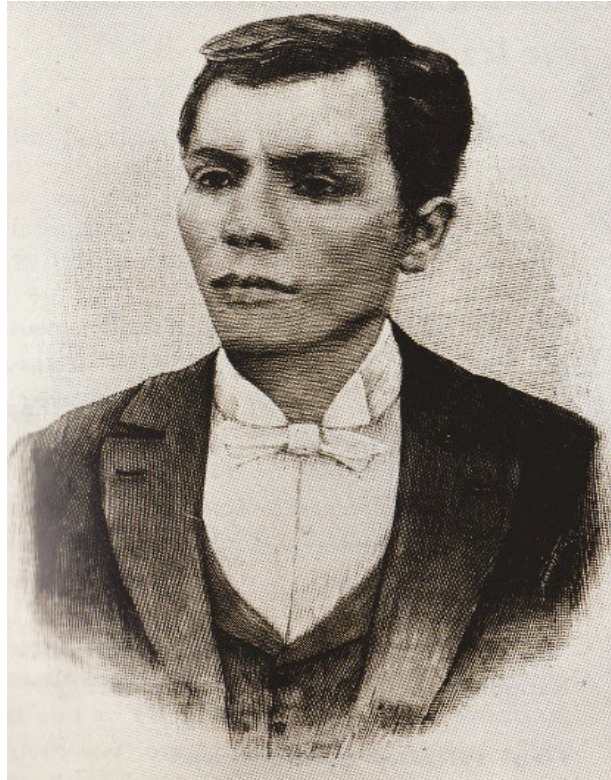
16. Numbers 31:17-18 (Kill everyone but keep the virgins for yourselves) *“Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women children, that have not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves.”*

The above list is just a sampling of verses that Christians would rather avoid talking about. Clearly, the Yahwist won the day. Their concept of God became the pre-eminent belief of the Jews. Reinforced, perhaps, by their years of dispersion, it has become instinctive, mechanical, and spontaneous for the Jews to adopt a vengeful concept of God.

Today, we see the same concepts at play especially among those who call themselves as “God’s chosen people.” It is surprising to hear Jewish rabbis support Israeli soldiers who raped and tortured their hostages, even claiming that they have the divine right to do such things. Equally scandalous is the worldwide support by Christians to “stand with Israel” while a genocidal carnage is being done.

There are those who thrive in using fear in their concept of a vengeful God to recruit and convert and then hostage their members. They offer no room for dissent or intellectual discussion. They have caged the mind and logical capacities of their adherents making it almost impossible to be free.

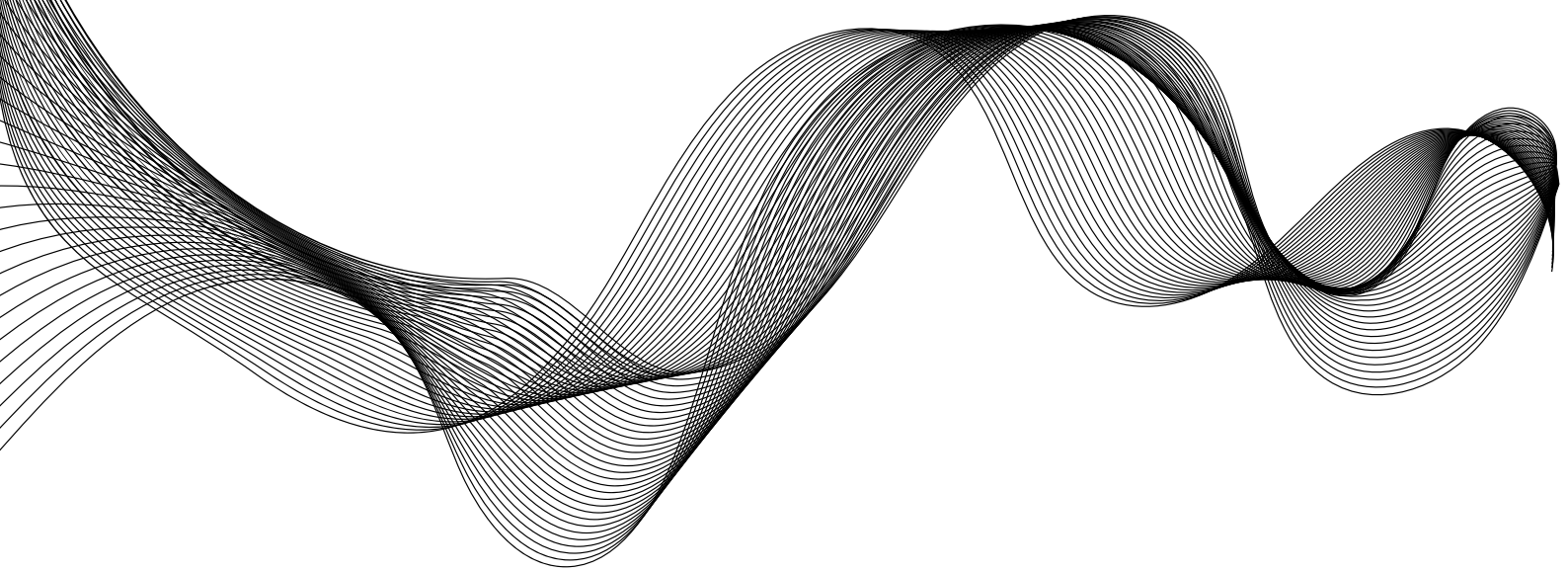
In the midst of all these religious reprobations now comes again the concept of Deism rising up as a philosophy of freedom of the mind, body, soul, and everything else in between. There are no religious boundaries, doctrinal impositions, sectarian limitations, and intellectual restraints. The mind is free to explore all avenues of learning, various philosophies, and the limits of knowledge (if any). It teaches equality, responsibility, accountability, and stewardship. Absolute freedom is to be free to pursue humanity’s potential in all areas of human endeavor without fear of any devil or favor from any God.



Andres Bonifacio

"Reason teaches us that we must be of service to our fellow men."

Andres Bonifacio, the Filipino revolutionary leader, was influenced by Deistic ideas through his advocacy for reason, self-reliance, and the natural rights of individuals. Although not formally recognized as a Deist, Bonifacio's writings and actions showed a belief in a Creator without strict allegiance to organized religion. His approach to spirituality was rooted in the idea of freedom, rational thought, and moral duty, which aligned with Deistic principles. This perspective helped shape his vision for an independent Philippines, where people could think freely and uphold values of justice and equality.



THREE: CHRONOLOGY AND TWISTED ACROBATICS

The Power of Religious Absolution

There is no greater motivation to do evil in the name of the gods than to know that there is absolution waiting through the power of religion. Religious absolution frees the immoral from fear of any punishment in this life and in the life to come. This fact gives religions unhampered power to pursue evil in many forms. Sadly, all Abrahamic religions practice absolutions.

To the analytical mind, a chronological arrangement of the books of the Bible will definitely raise doubts and questions. I will only take into consideration the books of the New Testament at this point. Taking into account the years and the succession of commonly accepted years of writing of each NT Book, the transference of knowledge from one to the other is brought into question. The NT books were written when the apostles were already 50-95 years old, or more - definitely a very long time where age has become a factor for both memory and health and further considering that they lived under many years of persecution.

Bible dating is a complex science. It is not void of arguments as scholars use different tools or concepts to determine their dates of writing. Language evolves over time, and this dynamic plays a crucial role in Bible dating. For example, the Hebrew language is proven to be non-existent during the time of Moses making scholars reject his authorship of the Pentateuch.

More recent dating methods propose later timelines but I will refer to an older and more widely known dating.

It is popularly believed that in the years between 50-57 A.D that the Epistles of James, Galatians, 1&2 Thessalonians, 1&2 Corinthians and Romans were written in succession. Take note that these were written before the first Gospel, Mark.

Between 60-66 A.D. were written in possible succession Mark, Matthew, Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, Luke, Philippians, 1 Peter, Acts, 1 Timothy, Titus, Jude, 2 Timothy, and 2 Peter.

The book of Hebrews was believed to have been written by an unknown author about the year 70 A.D. If the writer was also an apostle, he should be about 70 years old also.

The Gospel of John was believed to have been written about 85 A.D, and his epistles 1-3 about the year 90.A.D. The book of revelation was traditionally believed to have been written about 95 A.D. John must be very old, if still

alive then.

References:

NIV Study Bible (2011)

Archaeology Study Bible (2006)

MacDonald (1990) "Believer's Bible Commentary"

Here are some of the implications of the Bible Chronology:

One: The dating makes it clear that Paul has not read the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke before his assumed conversion. More so, the Gospel of John was written long after he died. Since Paul never met Jesus in person, the Christology written in his epistles now come clear as fabrications.

Two: The Acts narrative is a fabrication. No extra-biblical or eyewitness account in history supports the story of Paul in his missionary travels. No other person ever wrote of the significant miracles written in Acts in spite of many noble and influential men included in the narrative. The Acts narrative is about Paul's attempt at creating a religion, not about Jesus.

Three: The apostles Matthew and John were illiterates as can be extracted from the Gospel narratives. The Bible itself makes this crystal clear. They don't know how to read and write even in their own (Aramaic/Hebrew) language. How then can Matthew and John write in Greek?

Four: Mark and Luke were not disciples of Jesus. They were probably just babies when Jesus was already preaching. They, therefore, could not be considered as "eyewitnesses" of the life of Jesus, which makes their writings as fabrications.

Five: Herod was said to have put to death all male babies in his attempt to counter the prophecy of the coming Messiah. That would have rendered John the Baptist and probably all the apostles that we know dead at a very young age. If true, they could never have lived to become apostles and write the Gospel narratives.

Six: Matthew wrote about the year 60 A.D. Historically, the years before and following were the years of intense persecution by the Romans, culminating in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. In such a restrictive situation, how could anyone, allowing the possibility of inspiration, write with the tools and limitations that they have?

Seven: John wrote between 85-95 A.D. It is historically argued that life expectancy for males in those days was just 40 years. The suggested time of writing must have rendered John very old, that is, if he has indeed survived the life of a fugitive and an exile.

Eight: The Book of Hebrews is clearly the work of a learned man, possibly a scholar. The Bible knows of no disciple in the 1st century capable enough to write a book of such scholarly caliber - in Greek.

Nine: At around 85-95 years of age, and if really still alive, John was too old to write his three epistles and his voluminous gospel. A deeper look at John's Gospel also reveals the deep knowledge of the writer in Greek Gnostic Philosophy. The use of the word "logos" at the very start of the gospel betrays that fact, which I have explained further in this book.

Ten: Modern Scholars argue that the Gospel of John was written about 120-125 A.D., which makes it the last book of the New Testament written. If true, this assertion will further put in question many things traditionally believed about the Bible. Was the Apostle John still alive at 125 years old? What about the other issues of old age he has to contend with?

The above statements prove that the entire gospel narratives were fraudulent as they were insidious fabrications. They are anachronistic, belonging to a period other than that being portrayed. *(Insidious: having a gradual and cumulative effect, subtle, developing so gradually as to be well established before becoming apparent.)*

MATTHEW 1:1, 17 - Something must be told about the genealogy of Jesus totaling 77 generations.

1 - This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham:

verses 2-16 - names of fathers or patriarchs

17 Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to the Messiah.

If we include the genealogy from the time of Adam, there will be 77 generations, with all the names of the fathers mentioned. AMAZING! you might say. Who recorded all those names? Where did Matthew get all those names? When did man learn to write and record anyway?

Were the inclusion of so many names designed to confuse the readers and hide in plain sight a fundamental weakness of the “Jesus is the Messiah” narrative?

Or, like the deists that I am, just take that info with a grain of salt and just call it a FABRICATION.

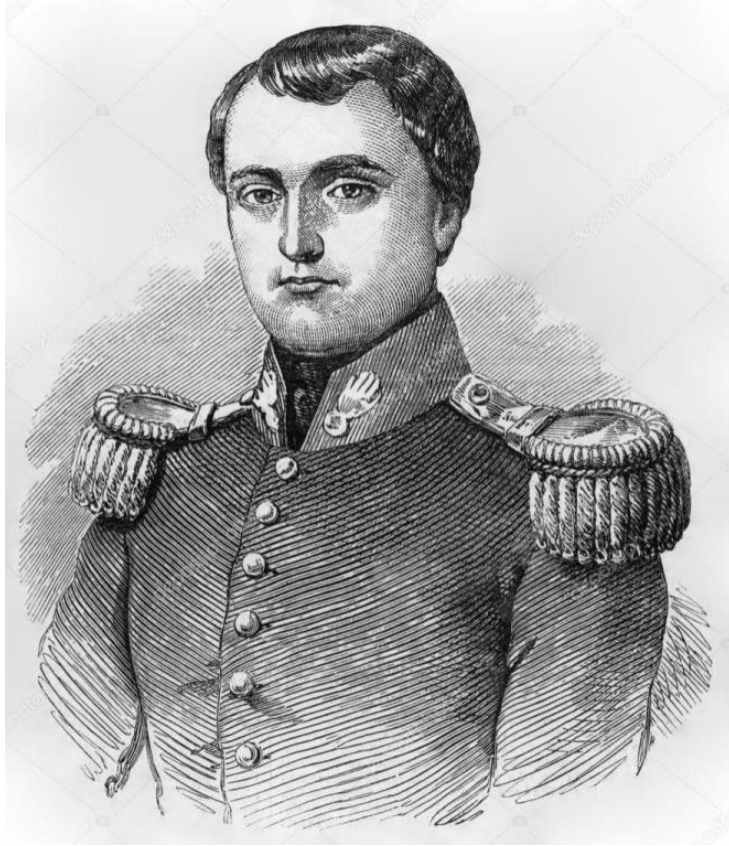
JESUS IS DISQUALIFIED BY BIBLE GENEALOGY TO BE THE MESSIAH.

The Book of Matthew starts with the Genealogy of Jesus through Joseph, while it is said that Luke followed the line of Mary. Jewish lineage is traced through men, so Jesus’ lineage through Mary or Joseph can be traced back to David after several generations. If analyzed judiciously, the Virgin birth story, the backbone of the Immaculate Conception doctrine, becomes the thing that

breaks the back of Mariology and Jesus' Messiahship. The efforts to connect Jesus to the promised messiah, the son of David, miserably failed when the human lineage to David was interrupted by the virgin birth. Whether through Mary or Joseph, Jesus' connection to David was effectively cut when God Himself impregnated Mary. And if Jesus is not the Messiah, the virgin birth doctrine is good for nothing.

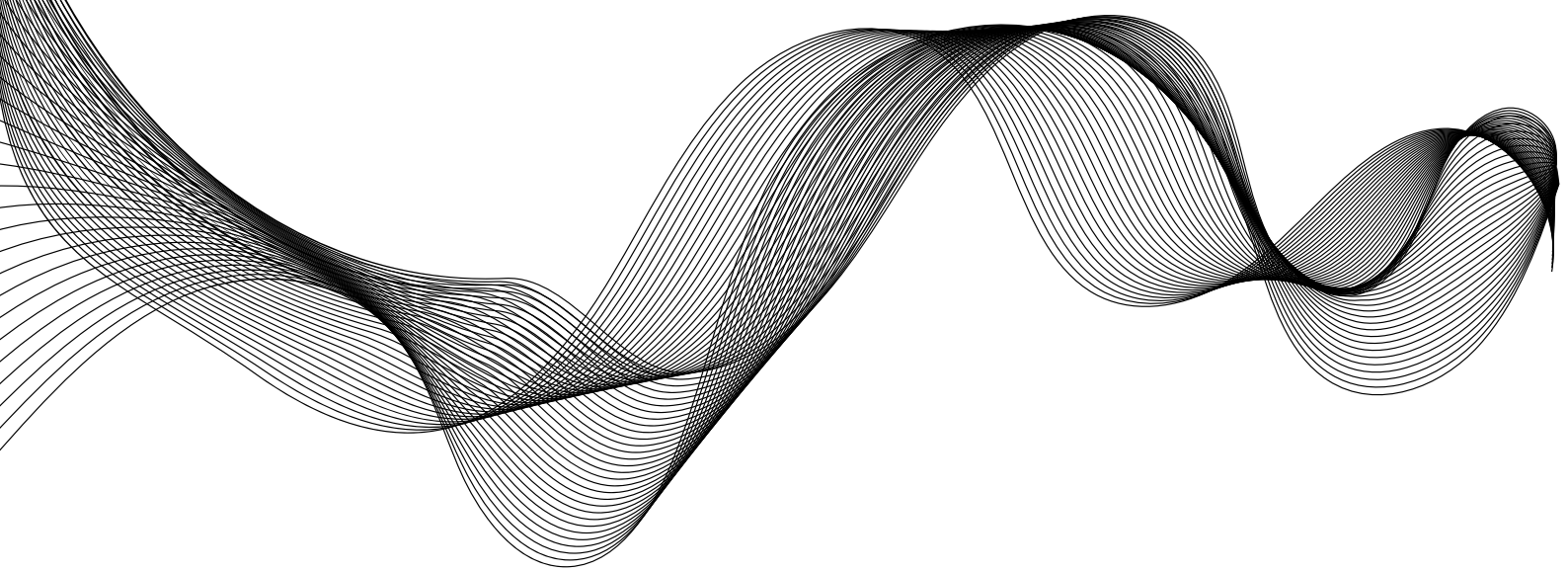
Though meaningless to Christians, the Jewish rejection of Jesus as the Messiah speaks volumes of reasons why the doctrine is flawed.

I do recognize that going against traditional understanding is a difficult task. There will be a long process of doctrinal deconstruction that many would have to undergo to begin to agree with me.



Napoleon Bonaparte

Napoleon Bonaparte contributed to Deism through his pragmatic approach to religion and governance. Although he was not a strict Deist, his policies promoted religious tolerance and the separation of church and state, which aligned with Deistic principles. Napoleon recognized the importance of faith in society but believed that religion should not interfere with politics. He established the Concordat of 1801, which redefined the relationship between the Catholic Church and the French state, allowing for a more rational and organized approach to religion. By promoting civil liberties and emphasizing the need for a moral framework in governance, he encouraged a rational understanding of divinity that resonates with Deistic thought.



FOUR: THE EVILS OF RELIGION

"The most detestable wickedness, the most horrid cruelties, and the greatest miseries that have afflicted the human race have had their origin in this thing called revelation, or revealed religion. It has been the most dishonorable belief against the character of the Divinity, the most destructive to morality and the peace and happiness of man, that ever was propagated since man began to exist.

Whence arose all the horrid assassinations of whole nations of men, women, and infants, with which the Bible is filled, and the bloody persecutions and tortures unto death, and religious wars, that since that time have laid Europe in blood and ashes- whence rose they but from this impious thing called revealed religion and this monstrous belief that God has spoken to man?

It is then false to say that Christianity was not established by the sword. The only sect that has not persecuted others is the Quakers; and the only reason that can be given for it is, that they are rather Deists than Christians."

Excepts: The Age of Reason, by Thomas Paine

HISTORY OF RELIGIOUS COLONIZATIONS

A -- Catholic Colonizations and Persecutions:

Dum Diversas -- is a papal bull issued on 18 June 1452 by Pope Nicholas V. It authorized King Afonso V of Portugal to conquer "Saracens (Muslims) and pagans" in a disputed territory in Africa and consign them to "perpetual servitude". This and the subsequent bull (Romanus Pontifex), issued by Nicholas in 1455, gave the Portuguese the right to acquire slaves along the African coast by force or trade. The edicts are thus seen as having facilitated the Portuguese slave trade from West Africa and as having legitimized the European colonization of the African continent. It recognized Portugal's rights to territories it had discovered along the West African coast and the reduction of the infidels and non-Christian territories to perpetual vassals of the Christian monarch.

Pope Calixtus III reiterated this in the 1456 bull *Inter caetera* (not to be confused with Alexander VI's bull of the same title), renewed by Pope Sixtus IV in 1481 and Pope Leo X in 1514 with *Praeaeclarissimae*. The concept of the consignment of exclusive spheres of influence to certain nation-states was extended to the Americas in 1493 by Pope Alexander VI with the promulgation of *Inter Caetera*.

What is the Inter Caetera?

Pope Alexander VI issued a papal bull or decree, "Inter Caetera," in which he authorizes Spain and Portugal to colonize the Americas and its Native peoples as subjects. The decree asserts the rights of Spain and Portugal to colonize, convert, and enslave. It also justifies the enslavement of Africans.

B -- European Colonization of Southeast Asia

A significant feature is the fact that so many Western countries were involved in this colonization -- Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, British, French, and Americans. Economic competition and international rivalries were primary motivations, but they were often justified by claims of spreading Christianity and "civilization".

C -- The Crusades:

Spanning more than two hundred years (1096-1300 CE), the Crusades were, in essence, military expeditions initiated by the medieval papacy to wrest the Holy Lands from Moslem control. These were wars waged in the name of religion.

D -- The Wars of the Reformation

The European wars of religion were a series of wars waged in Europe during the 16th, 17th, and early 18th centuries. Fought after the Protestant Reformation began in 1517, the wars disrupted the religious and

political order in the Catholic countries of Europe, or Christendom. The wars were largely ended by the Peace of Westphalia (1648), which established a new political order that is now known as Westphalian Sovereignty. The Peace of Westphalia weakened the Catholic Church's power by recognizing that kingdoms could choose their own religions. It also broadly resolved the conflicts by recognizing three separate Christian traditions in the Holy Roman Empire: Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Calvinism.

I suppose that we don't need to delve into the gory details of those religious wars. Our local (Philippines) history is replete with horrendous memories when we were under subjugation. The Philippines have suffered 300+ years of humiliation from Spain, decades of atrocities from America, and a few years with the Japanese. It is perhaps enough to say that as a country we were able to free ourselves from our colonizers, albeit with much hardships and sacrifice.

THE ROLE OF FREEMASONRY IN THE PHILIPPINE REVOLUTION

I would also take this as an opportunity to highlight that our foremost hero, Jose Rizal, was a deist. So were Andres Bonifacio and Emilio Aguinaldo, and though not clearly stated in our history books, many more of our heroes were deists, or deist-leaning. They were all members of a strongly deist society called the Freemasons. The driving spirit of the Philippine

Revolution was the tenets of Freemasonry. So, in this regard, we can include the Juan and Antonio Luna, Emilio Jacinto, and Marcelo del Pilar who was instrumental in establishing Filipino Freemasonry, and many others.

Follow the links for more info:

<https://www.philippinemasonry.org/philippine-masonry-from-barcelona-to-manila-1889-1896.html#:~:text=Marcelo%20del%20Pilar%20was%20instrumental,Father%20of%20True%20Philippine%20Masonry>

<https://www.philippinemasonry.org/the-katipunan-and-masonry.html>



Abraham Lincoln

“I have never united myself to any church, because I Found difficulty in giving my assent to the creeds of those who did.”

Abraham Lincoln’s contributions to Deism are reflected in his emphasis on reason, morality, and a personal understanding of God. While he was not formally aligned with any religious doctrine, Lincoln often expressed Deistic sentiments in his speeches and writings, advocating for the importance of individual conscience and ethical conduct. He believed in a higher power that guided humanity through natural laws rather than through organized religion. His calls for unity, compassion, and justice during the Civil War resonated with Deistic principles, emphasizing a moral duty to serve others and uphold human rights. Lincoln’s inclusive approach to spirituality helped foster a sense of shared humanity and laid the groundwork for a more secular understanding of governance.



FIVE: JESUS, REGURGITATED FROM HISTORY

“What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.”
Ecclesiastes 1:9 (NIV)

Admit it, recycling beliefs is the norm of building a religion, which is defined as a body of beliefs and practices regarding the supernatural and the worship of one or more deities. The most obvious example is Christianity, with 77% of their Bible anchored from the Old Testament. Countless other religions have emerged from Catholic Christianity, each with their own interpretations of the same texts. While the core texts remained the same, others added some books while others reduced them. Their priesthood, creeds, and rituals also evolved into numerous persuasions. It is fascinating to observe the results that continue to transpire through these recycling process. Most Christians do not bother to trace the origins of their religion, much less their beliefs and rituals. If they do, they might be in for the shock of their lives. The central event in the celebration of Christmas is, of course, the birth and life of Jesus Christ, considered a great prophet by Muslims, but as God by his followers.

Christians - Protestants, and Catholics alike - have been led to believe that the story of Jesus, his birth, death, and resurrection is unique, and that there is no other like him. Many read only books with the imprimatur or approval of the church until their hunger for knowledge embolden them to venture outside their intellectual comfort zone and discover how shortsighted their religious education had been.

One of the things one will discover is that the story of Jesus Christ is not at all unique, that it could have been copied from some much older accounts of dying and resurrection of gods in ancient pagan religions. In fact, there are more than a dozen pagan gods whose stories seem to parallel Jesus' life and death, although they preceded Christ by hundreds, or even thousands, of years.

Here are names of Gods throughout history that were said to have been born by a virgin on 25th December.

HORUS

An Ethiopian-Sudanese God, born 25th December, by a Virgin around 3,000 YEARS before Jesus.

BUDDHA

A Nepal God, born 25th December, by a Virgin around 563 YEARS before Jesus.

KRISHNA

An Indian God, born 25th December, by a Virgin around 900 YEARS before Jesus.

ZARATHUSTRA

An Iranian God, born 25th December, by a Virgin around 1,000 YEARS before Jesus.

HERCULES

A Greek God, born 25th December, by a Virgin around 800 YEARS before Jesus.

MITHRA

A Persian God, born 25th December, by a Virgin- 600 YEARS before Jesus.

DIONYSUS

A Greek God, born 25th December, by a Virgin around 500 YEARS before Jesus.

THAMMUZ

A Babylonian God, born 25th December, by a Virgin around 400 YEARS before Jesus.

HERMES

A Greek God, born 25th December, by a Virgin around 200 YEARS before Jesus.

ADONIS

A Phoenician God, born 25th December, by a Virgin around 200 YEARS before Jesus.

JESUS CHRIST

A Roman God, born 25th December, by a Virgin around 1-4 AD.

MYTHS

At the heart of these teachings were myths concerning a dying and resurrecting god-man or demigod, who was known by many different names. In Egypt he was Osiris; in Greece, Dionysus; in Asia Minor, Attis; in Syria, Adonis; in Italy, Bacchus; in Persia, Mithras.

Let us take a closer look at some of the parallelisms.

Tammuz (2,000 B.C.) was a Mesopotamian god of fertility. His father was the Sumerian God Enki and his consort the goddess Inanna (Ishtar). Tammuz was essentially a pastoral deity, a shepherd.

March and April mark the death of Tammuz. Tammuz died at the hands of Inanna, but she eventually brought him back to life. He died to save people from starvation and death. Like Jesus, Tammuz was called a shepherd.

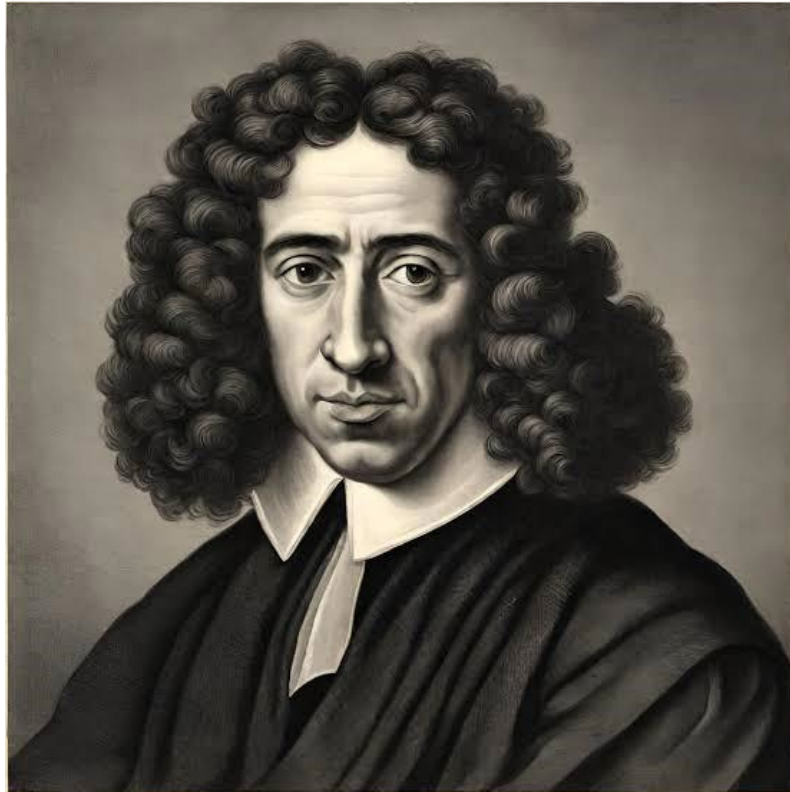
Osiris (2,500 B.C.) His father was God and his mother a mortal virgin. He was born in a cave on Dec. 25, before three shepherds. He died at Easter time for the sins of the world. He descended into the underworld, and on the third day rose from the dead. His followers await his return as judge during the Last Days.

According to noted Egyptologist E.A. Wallis Budge in "Osiris and the Egyptian Resurrection": "The central figure of the ancient Egyptian religion was Osiris, and the chief fundamentals of his cult is the belief in his divinity, death, resurrection and absolute control of the bodies and souls of men."

Attis (1,200 B.C.) was born on Dec. 25. His mother was the virgin Nana. He was slain by a boar, but other stories say he was crucified on a tree from which his blood ran down "to redeem the earth." His grave was found empty. He resurrected on March 25.

4) Mithra (or Mithras, 1,200 B.C.) was born of a virgin on Dec. 25, had 12 disciples and performed miracles. He died and then resurrected after three days. His day of worship is Sunday.

Is the story of Jesus unique? Definitely not. There are abundant proofs in the history of religions that resemble the narrative of his birth, life, miracles, death and resurrection. The fact that his story is not the first proves that it was regurgitated several times until it became the popular story that Christianity loves so much today.

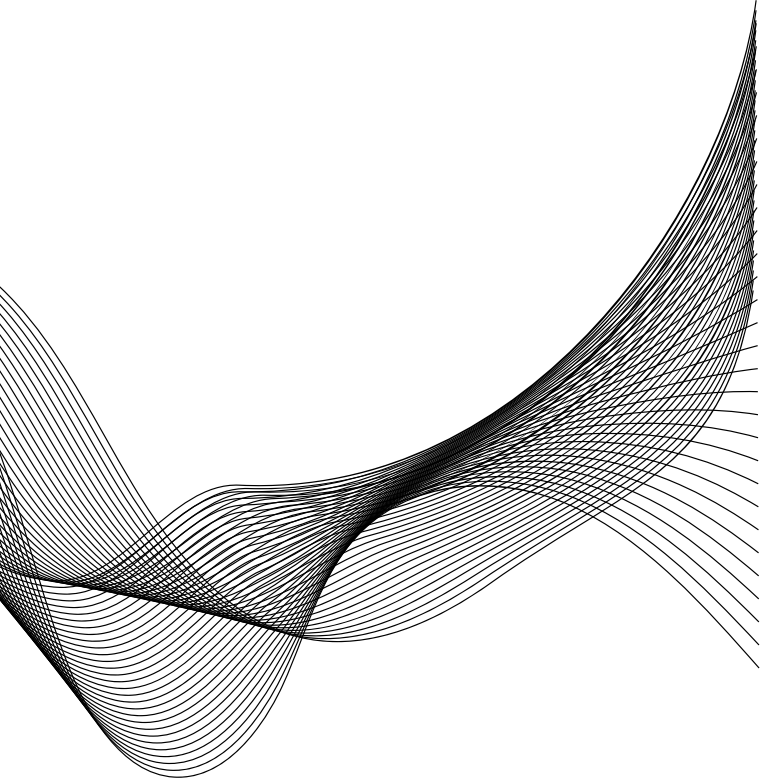


Benedict Spinoza

Benedict Spinoza's philosophy profoundly influenced deistic thought by offering a view of God as synonymous with nature (Deus sive Natura), suggesting that God is the underlying substance of the universe rather than a personal, interventionist deity. His approach to understanding God through reason and the study of nature, rather than through revelation, aligned closely with deism's rationalist beliefs. Spinoza rejected religious dogma, arguing that organized religion often manipulates people, which resonated with deists' critiques of traditional doctrines. Additionally, Spinoza viewed morality as rooted in rational ethics rather than divine command, advocating for ethical behavior based on understanding the nature of existence. His ideas

deeply influenced Enlightenment thinkers like Voltaire and Rousseau, who saw God as part of an orderly, law-governed universe—a core concept within deism.

is one of the most important philosophers—and certainly the most radical—of the early modern period. His thought combines a commitment to a metaphysical and epistemological principles with elements from ancient Stoicism, and medieval Jewish rationalism into a nonetheless highly original system. His extremely naturalistic views on God, the world, the human being and knowledge serve to ground a moral philosophy centered on the control of the passions leading to virtue and happiness. Of all the philosophers of the seventeenth century, Spinoza is among the most relevant today.



PART TWO: SPIRITUALITY AND REASON

THE SUBSTANCE OF GOD

Benedict Spinoza

God would say: "My house is in the mountains, in the forests, the rivers, the lakes, the beaches. That's where I live and express all my love for you.

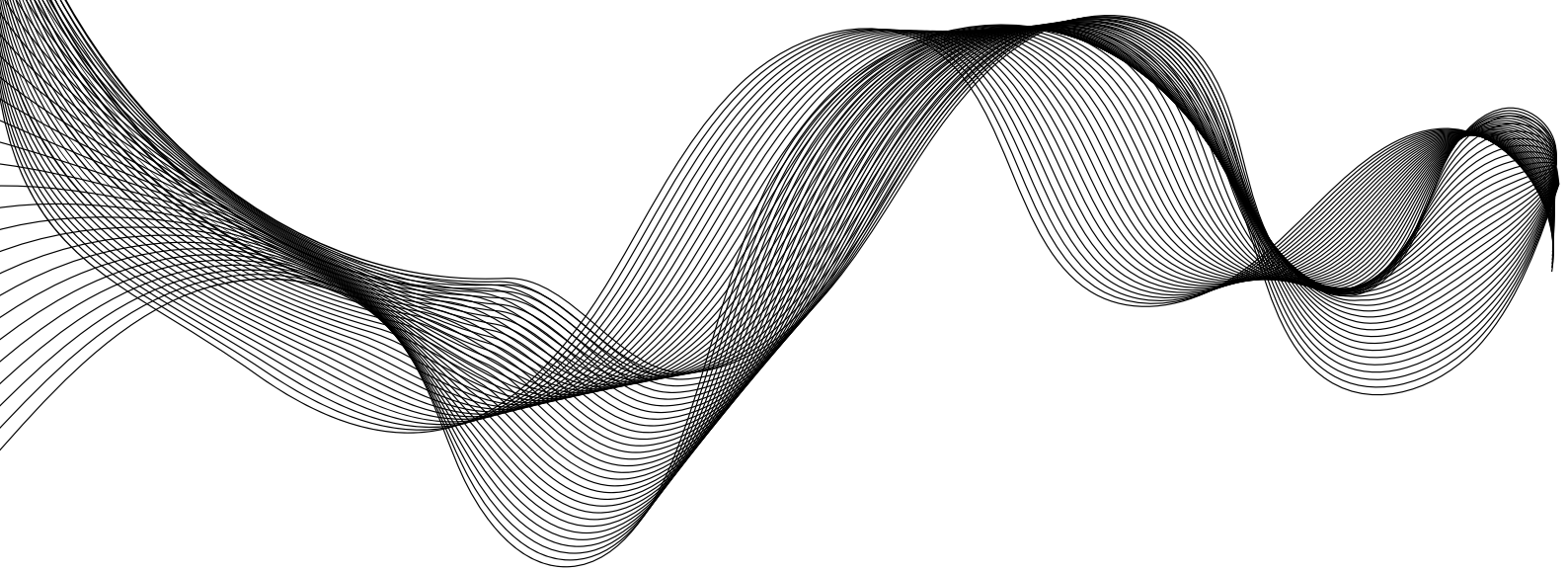
Stop reading alleged sacred scriptures that have nothing to do with me. If you can't read me in a sunrise, in a landscape, in the look of your friends, in your son's eyes... you will find me in no book!

Stop being so scared. I am pure love. Do you think I could create a place to burn all my children who misbehave for the rest of eternity? What kind of god can do that?

Respect your peers and don't do to others what you don't want for yourself. Stop believing in me. To believe is to assume, guess, imagine. I don't want you to believe in me, I want you to feel me when you kiss your beloved, when you play with your little girl, when you love your dog, when you bathe in the sea.

Stop praising me, what kind of egotistical God do you think I am? I'm bored being praised. I'm tired of being thanked. Do you feel grateful? Prove it by taking care of yourself, your health, your relationships, the world around you.

Don't look for me outside, you won't find me. Find me inside you... there I'm beating in you.



SIX: DEISM BRIEF

Is Deism Another Religion?

Deism is not a specific religion though many of its tenets are embraced by many religions. Many deists affirm that deism is the common ground for all beliefs that affirm the existence of God.

Deism asserts that what can be known about God is through the application of reason to the designs and laws found throughout Nature and the Universe. Deism is a natural religion and spiritual philosophy and bases its conclusions on observable facts and scientific discovery, not on fabricated revelations.

Deism, as a belief, became popular among the educated elites of Europe and America during the Age of Enlightenment but was muted by the intense opposition of the powerful fundamentalist religions of the past.

With a more open society and easier access to information, the present time seems to be shaping a bright future for deism.

The Google definition of deism is, "Belief in the existence of a supreme being, specifically of a creator who does not intervene in the universe."

Such a definition does not represent true deism, particularly that part that says “specifically of a creator who does not intervene in the universe.” I am convinced that some non-deists have forwarded that meaning through the years to distort the true definition of Deism to make their belief or religion look better.

Below is the official definition of deism from The World Union of Deists.

“Deism is the recognition of a universal creative force greater than that demonstrated by mankind, supported by personal observation of laws and designs in nature and the universe, perpetuated and validated by the innate ability of human reason coupled with the rejection of claims made by individuals and organized religions of having received special divine revelation.”

DOES GOD INTERVENE IN THE UNIVERSE?

True deists believe that God is active in the universe but not in the same way the Abrahamic religions define such interventions. Most deists are pantheistic which is the belief that God is the same as the Universe, the same as nature, etc. Subsets of this belief are called panentheism and pandeism which I have described in more detail in later chapters of this book. Deists believe that nature is active, alive, responsive, and conscious but not in an emotional way. The properties of nature determine how it reacts to any physical stimuli.

Despite being concerned with some of the topics that are addressed by various religions, deism is not a religion but a philosophy of life, though there are churches that espouse the philosophy of deism. There are no scriptures, no rites or ceremonies, no gatherings or churches, and no rules for behavior except that one must live a life that is beneficial to all.

Deism can also be thought about in light of what it rejects. Deists believe that god does not intervene in the universe, deists do not believe in divine origin or authorship for any scripture or miracle. The only revelation from God that deists accept is creation itself. THE DEIST BIBLE IS CREATION and the known Laws of Nature are, collectively, THE WORD OF GOD.

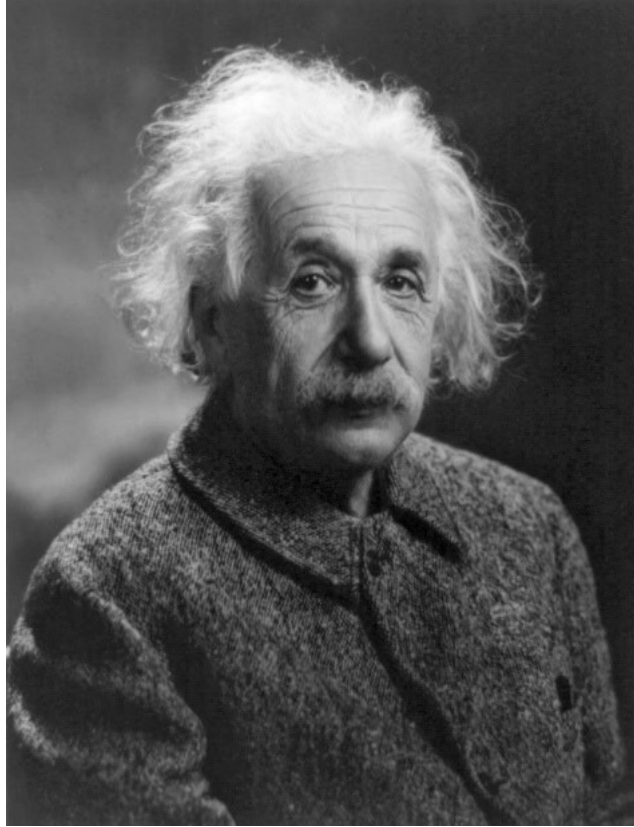
Deism is a philosophy of openness, peace, and inclusivity. It does not kill in the name of God or teach eternal damnation for any reason.

Morality in deism is NOT based on religious beliefs, creeds, or dogmas, some of which are outright obnoxious and repulsive to common sense. Deism believes that morality resides in the conscience of men.

Deism is the only “-ism” which is sufficiently broad to provide a logical place for all of the varied phenomena of life. Though some consider deism as a religious belief, it is not restrictive like the traditional religions that prohibit/restrict learning in the fields of science and philosophy, and in other religions. Deism encourages learning and discovery in every area of knowledge.

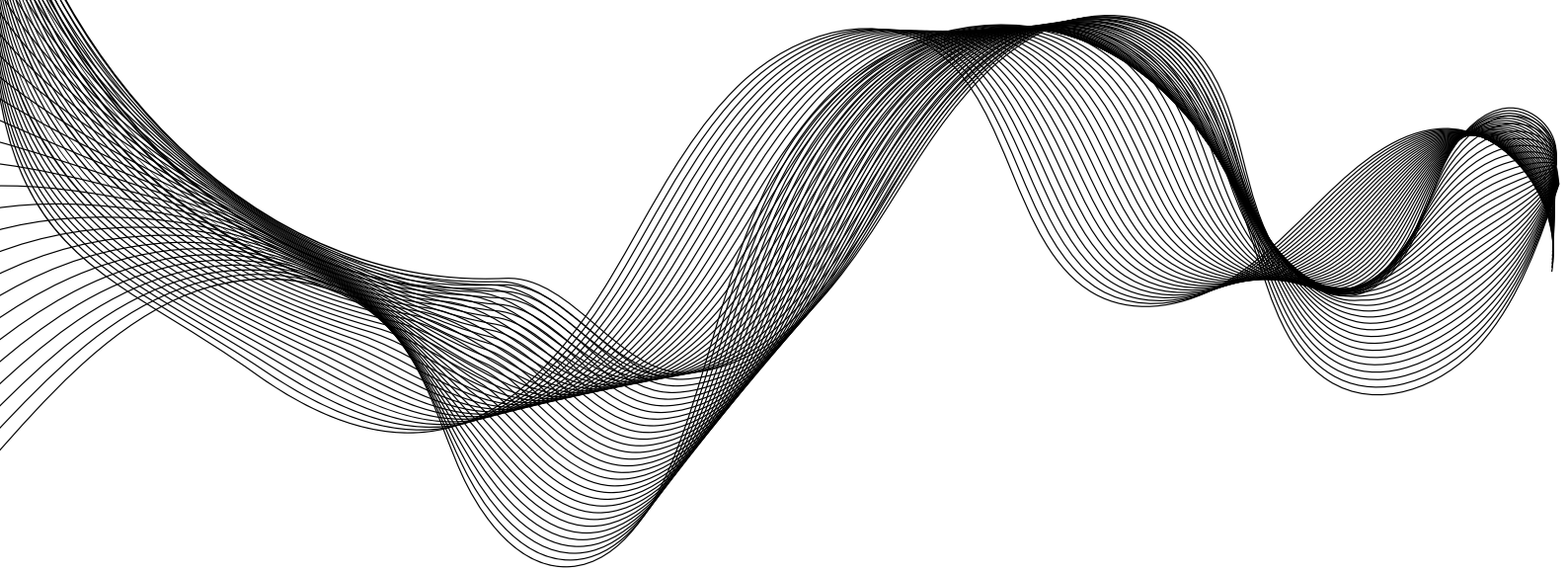
BASIC DEISM BELIEFS:

1. Belief in the existence of a Supreme Being (God) who created the world on the evidence of reason and nature.
2. Belief in God who governs the world through the Laws of Nature.
3. God designed the laws of nature and set everything in motion.
4. Belief that God is the eternal force of energy - omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and eternal, and has a transcendent intelligence.
5. Belief that what can be known about God can be known through nature and reason.
6. Belief that God does not have an immortal human-like body with male anatomy.
7. Deism is a philosophical position that states that there is an intelligent force responsible for the creation of the universe, that does not directly interact with or intervene in the universe.



Albert Einstein

*"I believe in Spinoza's God who reveals himself in the orderly harmony of what exists, not in a God who concerns himself with fates and actions of human beings".
"We view God as an eternal entity whose power is equal to his/her will. My religion consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable superior spirit who reveals himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds. That deeply emotional conviction of the presence of a superior reasoning power, which is revealed in the incomprehensible universe, forms my idea of God."*



SEVEN: GOD IS ALWAYS WITH US

Critics of deism say deists believe in an absentee God. Deists affirm that God is present in every situation, in every place, and at all times.

The issue lies in the differing of mindsets or perspectives. Critics are typically educated in the image of a human-like god, residing in heaven and looking down at humanity and the world from above. In contrast, deists believe that God has no physical human-like form, but he is transcendent and/or immanent in nature, and existing in the totality of the observable physical universe.

SOME RELEVANT WORDS TO CONSIDER

Deism is the belief in the existence of a creator, known in different religions and philosophies as God, The Grand Architect of the Universe, The Universal Intelligence, Brahma, Allah, Father, HaShem, Yahweh, Bathala, etc.

It is the belief that reason could uncover evidence of God in nature and that God had created the world and then allowed it to operate under natural laws. By the late 18th century, deism was the dominant religious-spiritual philosophy among Europe's educated classes; it was

accepted by many upper-class Americans of the same era, including the first three US presidents.

EVOLUTION OF THE DEFINITION OF DEISM

To many new believers, the word Deism has evolved to incorporate under its umbrella the concepts of Pandeism, Pantheism, and Panentheism.

Pantheism --a theological concept that identifies God with the universe, or regards the universe as a manifestation of God. God is present in every situation because God is unlimited by any known reality. God and the universe are the same things rather than separate things. In other words, 'God is all, and all is God.

Panentheism--is a concept that addresses the theological issue of God's relationship to the world by proposing that the world is "in God and God is in the world but is greater than the world."

Pandeism -- is a theological concept that combines aspects of pantheism and deism. It holds that the creator of the universe actually became the universe, and so ceased to exist as a separate and conscious entity.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DEISM AND THEISM

Theism's concept of God is mainly anthropomorphic; he is depicted as an old man in the sky who sees and oversees everything happening on earth (and the

universe). This is the concept of God in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Deism's concept of God is that God himself is the universe, or variants of it as defined in pandeism, pantheism, and panentheism.

Taking the basic definitions into consideration, who then is the absentee god? Let us elaborate.

Consider the three big religions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam where God is regarded as the Old Man in the Sky. The very depiction of himself as a man limits his presence to a specific place at any given time. Examples of these are found in many verses in the Bible where God is clearly absent like in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit.

Is it any surprise then that the prayers of believers for Him to intervene in wars and prevent disasters are not answered? How many millions of people pray to him every day to stop wars, alleviate poverty, prevent accidents, etc? Include the mundane prayers about finding a husband or wife, safe travels, getting lucky about some things, etc. How many such prayers really get answers from the old man in the sky? If anyone gets an answer, was it really from the man in the sky or did the person do something to get it?

Consider the millions who prayed in times of wars where people from warring factions pray. Whose prayers really

get answered? Did God really intervene, or did the more capable army wins?

Hospitals worldwide are filled with millions of people praying for the patients to be healed. Why, it seems, that the old man in the sky is not showing up anywhere? Who is a no-show? Who is the absentee God?

Poverty today is not limited to Africa. Just walk through the avenues of some of the big cities in the U.S. Europe, Central and South America, and Asia, and see poverty looking at you in the eyes. Are there people there praying? Why is their God not answering? Why is he not showing Himself? Why is the God of the Bible so silent?

Deists have no such problems. Change your concept of God and your theological, and doctrinal problems will dissipate. Yes, there is no expectation of a God who actively intervenes in deism, rather the teaching is that God has given man reason, common sense, and the ability to rise above his circumstances and find the solutions to his problems. If deism is right in its assertion that God is the same as nature, reason teaches us that all the answers to human needs are in nature/God. In deism, God designed man to be responsible and proactive, not fatalistic.

With the concept of God being synonymous with the Universe --- when is God then ever absent from the world? Other words used corresponding to God are Nature and Energy. Apply all the philosophical attributes of God of omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotent, etc,

and find out realistically that the Universe/Nature/Energy fulfills them all. It gives birth to life, sustains it, recycles it, receives it in death, and makes everything new. In this concept of God nothing is lost, everything stays co-terminus with the Universe. God, or the Universe, has never left humanity.

Take away the religious fundamentalism connected to a single book and a humanesque god, and welcome a new age of better understanding.

In Deism, eternal life (consciousness) becomes not just an assumption; it becomes reality. Being part of nature, all kinds of consciousness are forever integrated into God's consciousness.

In the realm of faith, many nature-believing, non-anthropomorphic spiritual movements have sprung up in the last 300 years, reviving the old ones maliciously labeled as pagan, animistic, cultic, etc. New statistics worldwide reveal the decline of the Abrahamic religions while nature-believing spiritual movements are continually on the rise.

REALITY VERSUS ASSUMPTIONS

How many of your prayers or needs have been answered not by the man in the sky but by your labor, persistence, ingenuity, resourcefulness, friends, acquaintances, professionals in various fields, etc?

> You want food -- God/nature gives it

- > You want money - you can work for it.
- > You want health and healing - nature is the source of all medicines we know whether synthetic or organic.
- > You want happiness - respect nature, be contented, and live well with others.
- > You want justice -- seek advice from professionals in that field.
- > You have a house to build -- Call the skilled craftsmen.
- > You want a job - you can pray all you want or go to a job site.
- > You want a life partner -- you can pray all you want or go to a dating site or meet people and find out which one can bring results.

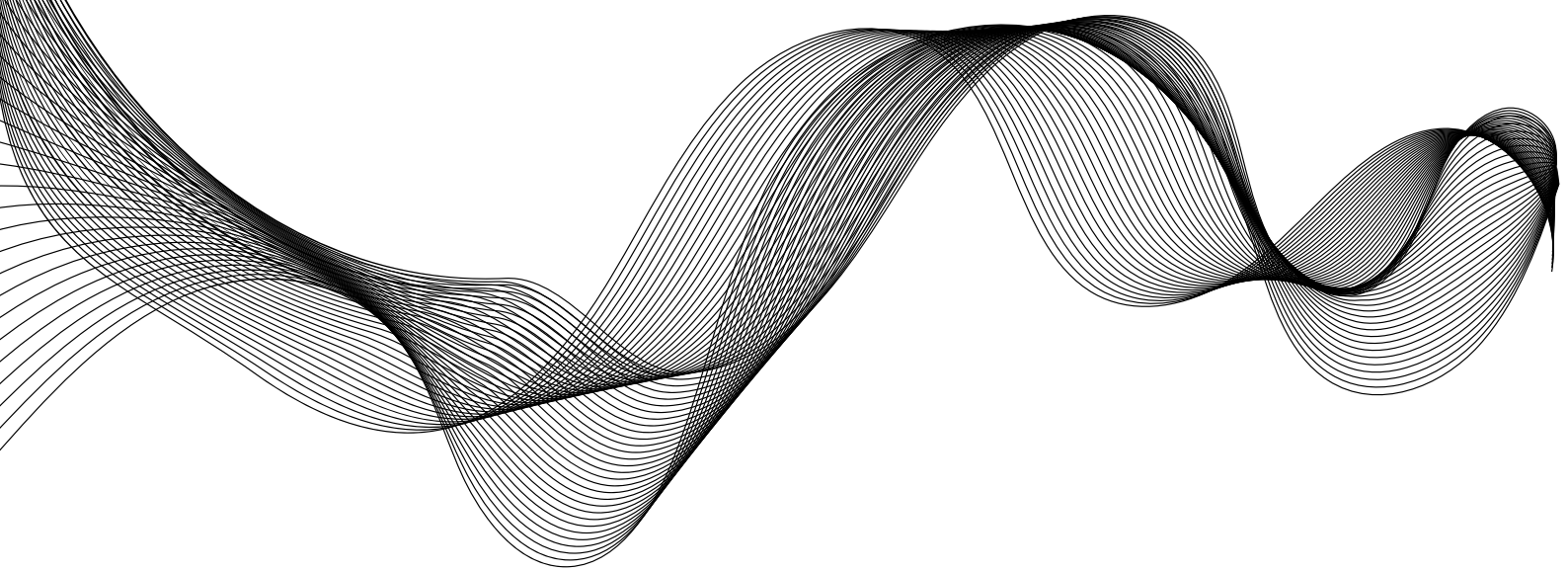
The answers to our needs are just around us; be active and resourceful in finding it! No Sky Daddy will come to help you. Nature/the universe has been with us in the past, is presently with us, and will be with us forever. No other physical thing in the universe can be as omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, and eternal as nature/universe. We have all that is needed to see the truth: the universe or nature = God.



Thomas Jefferson

“I am a sect by myself, as far as I know.”

Thomas Jefferson was a prominent advocate of Deism, significantly influencing American thought and values. He emphasized reason, individual liberty, and the separation of church and state. Jefferson’s belief in a rational God led him to create the Jefferson Bible, which removed supernatural elements from the New Testament, focusing instead on the moral teachings of Jesus. His writings, such as the Declaration of Independence, reflect Deistic principles by asserting that individuals are endowed with natural rights and that government should protect these rights. commitment to religious freedom and tolerance helped shape the foundation of American democracy and the role of reason in faith.



EIGHT: JESUS, THE DEIST

There is a version of the Bible written by Thomas Jefferson, the third President of the United States. It didn't include major scenes like the resurrection or ascension to heaven or miracles like turning water into wine or walking on water. Instead, Jefferson's Bible focused on Jesus as a man of morals, a teacher whose truths were expressed without the help of miracles or the supernatural powers of God.

Like other American Founding Fathers and Presidents, Thomas Jefferson was considered a Deist, subscribing to the liberal religious strand of Deism that values reason over revelation and rejects traditional Christian doctrines, including the Virgin Birth, Original Sin, and the Resurrection of Jesus.

It should be made clear at the outset that Jesus did not write a single word of the Christian Bible, nor founded Christianity. The only instance where he is said to have written anything was on the sand on the occasion of the accusation of the woman caught in adultery. Whatever he wrote, or drew there, has long since vanished.

On the question of the existence of Jesus, I have made it clear in my previous writings that if there lived a man Jesus - he was just a man, maybe the best of our race, but just a man. The mythical, miracle-working Jesus of Christianity is just a fabrication.

In this book, I have followed the lead of Thomas Jefferson and bring out the man Jesus, his morals, and teachings that are possible for man to follow and obey. I will not coach anyone to even attempt to duplicate the miracles done by Jesus as they are impossible to achieve. I do not expect anyone to be able to turn water into wine like Jesus did even though it could be the most ordinary of his miracles.

When it comes to morality, I don't expect anyone to gouge out their eyes, hang a large millstone around their necks, or cut their hands and feet -- if they believe they have sinned. To my comfort, I have never seen a Christian pastor do anything like that though they admit that they, too, are sinners.

Christians have assumed they know Jesus, his story, and his teachings, but a judicious evaluation of what has been written about him will tell a different story from what is commonly known or taken as true.

Using the Jefferson Bible, Deism presents the man Jesus. It follows the story line of the gospels but it takes away the myth of the miracle-working Jesus that Christianity knows. He is presented as a man, the best of the human race, an example we can really follow.

I will endeavor to cover some parts of the gospels in this chapter - the Jefferson way - the deist way. Stripped of divinity and all the miracles, Jesus comes to us as one we can really follow. Let us start with two or three Deism principles found in: 1. The Greatest Commandments and, 2. Love for Humanity in the story of the Good Samaritan.

1. The Greatest Commandments

'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself. (Matthew 22:36-40; Luke 10:30-37)

Loving God in the deist way is expressed in a very practical way - take care of creation. Since creation to a deist-pandeist is equivalent to God, taking care of creation, or nature, comes as the most practical and direct expression of loving God. To the deists, care for nature and service to humanity is equivalent to loving God.

Not to be strictly philosophical but there is a fine line of difference between the words love and worship. Worship in churches today is largely defined as singing, often accompanied by loud musical instruments, and by standing for extended periods of time. And that, to the modern Christian, is worship. Add that to the mentality that worship can only be done inside their churches.

And in the Christian churches where God is seen as a sky-daddy, the expression of worship is characterized by irregularity, or by randomness. Just look at the different ways modern Christianity worships God. Pay attention to the words of their songs and the type of music that goes with them.

2. Love for Humanity in the story of the Good Samaritan

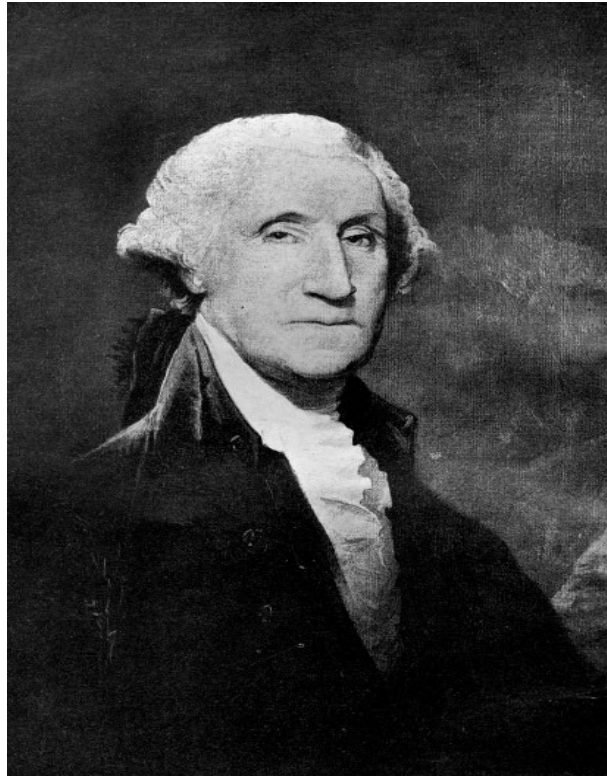
Of all the examples that Jesus could possibly give, he picked the story of the traveling Samaritan as the model for human relations in times of need. Such love is predicated on only one thing, someone is in dire need.

The response of the Samaritan was not conditioned by similarity in race, religion, education, social status, etc. In legal terms, a Samaritan Response is done if the victim is unconscious or unresponsive, on the grounds of implied consent.

We are told in the narrative that the Samaritan was left on the road half-dead. His condition suggests that he is unable to call for help, possibly unconscious and unresponsive.

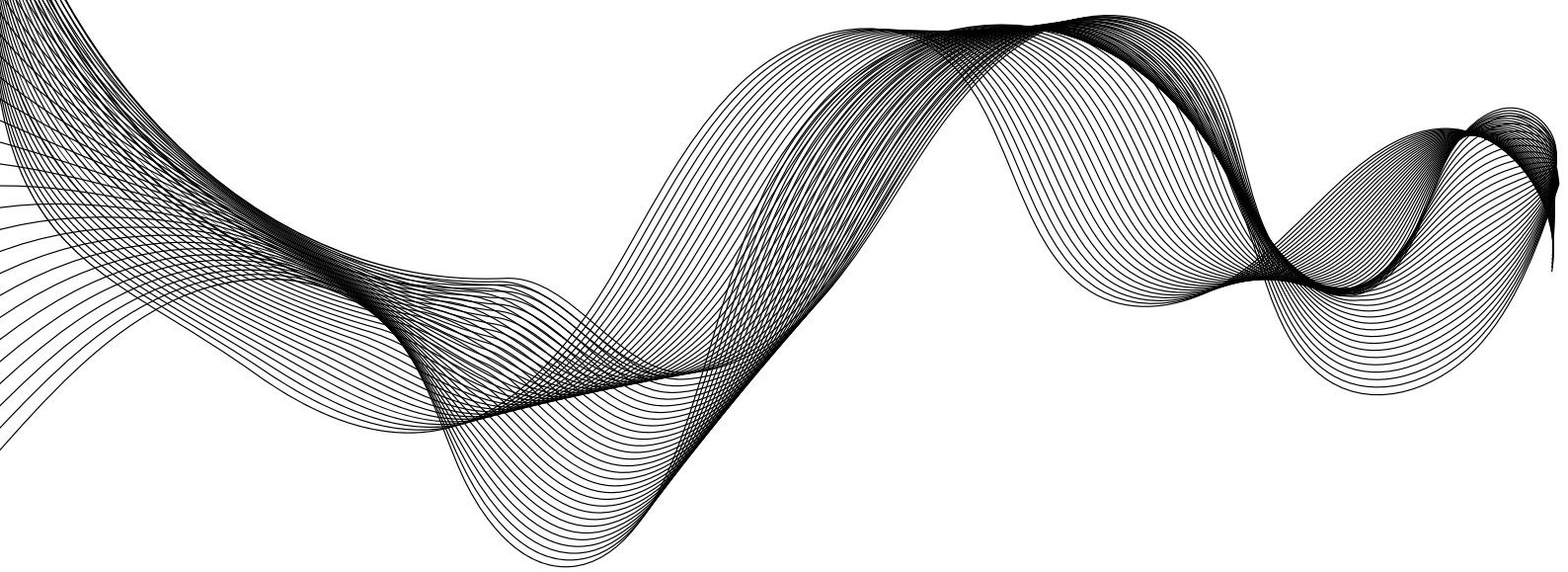
The Samaritan, through merciful actions, restores the human dignity of the anonymous man on the dangerous Jericho road. The parable clearly reveals human virtues such as compassion, mercy, solidarity, generosity, and hospitality without religious or sectarian undertones.

This is love and spirituality, the deist way.



George Washington

George Washington's contributions to Deism are evident in his advocacy for religious tolerance, reason, and the importance of morality in governance. While he was not openly identified as a Deist, Washington's writings and speeches often reflected Deistic principles, emphasizing a belief in a Creator and the significance of natural law. He championed the idea that faith should be a personal journey rather than one dictated by organized religion. Washington's support for the separation of church and state and his belief in a government that respects individual liberties contributed to the foundation of a secular society where reason and ethics guide moral behavior, aligning closely with Deistic ideals.



NINE: THE MIND OF GOD

Much of the definition and information of Deism on the internet comes from its critics, not from adherents. Most notably, they say that the God of Deism has retreated and left humanity after creation. He became uninvolved and did not interfere in human affairs. This, to me, is farthest from the truth. Following are my reasons:

Deists, especially of the pandeist mold as I am, regard creation as the Word Of God. Popularized by Thomas Paine in his book, "The Age of Reason." His words have become the standard answer for many deists against the assertion of critics.

"THE WORD OF GOD IS THE CREATION WE BEHOLD and it is in this word, which no human invention can counterfeit or alter, that God speaks universally to man. It is only in the CREATION that all our ideas and conceptions of the word of God can unite. The Creation speaks a universal language, independent of human speech or human language. It is an ever-existing original, which every man can read. It cannot be forged; it cannot be counterfeited; it cannot be lost; it cannot be altered; it cannot be suppressed. It does not depend upon the will of

man whether it shall be published or not; it publishes itself from one end of the earth to the other. It preaches to all nations and to all worlds, and this word of God reveals to man all that is necessary for man to know of God.”

The same thought is also conveyed by the writer of Psalm 19: 1-4 --,

“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.”

Do the verses in Psalms say that Creation speaks, albeit in silence? Yes, it surely does. Maybe man has to learn how to listen to the still, small voice of God in creation. Is that possible? Of course. Will God speak and not desire to be heard?

With creation as his voice, it follows that God does not speak in human language. Correspondingly, though He understands human language, it could be reasonable to believe that he understands us more not in the words we utter but in the way we touch him through our inner being. Do we have anything in the world that can give us an idea of how this is done?

The New Thought Movement is a very progressive form of spirituality that believes in God as an omnipresent,

unconditionally loving spirit, the inter-connectedness of God and all life, and the inner divinity that lives in all of us. There is no fear or dogma, so we are free to look critically at spirituality and explore the golden thread of truth in all the world's religions.

The New Thought philosophy is seen by its adherents as succeeding ancient thought, which is the accumulated wisdom and philosophy from a variety of origins, such as Ancient Greek, Roman, Egyptian, Chinese, Taoist, Hindu, and Buddhist cultures and their related belief systems, primarily regarding the interaction among thought, belief, consciousness in the human mind, and the effects of these within and beyond the human mind.

The New Thought philosophies, though diverse, are called in many ways like, The Buddha Nature, Christ Consciousness, New Age Movement, Spiritualism, Holistic Health and Mysticism, Ananda Marga, etc. Not to be identified as another new thought idea, I have chosen to call this chapter, THE MIND OF GOD.

Romans 11:34 -- *“Who has known the mind of the LORD?”*

1 Corinthians 2:11 -- *“For who knows a person's thoughts except their spirit within them? In the same way, no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.”*

Isaiah 55:8-9 -- *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways*

higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

Understanding the workings of God’s mind is a profound challenge. How does God’s mind work? Everyone can quote from the Bible but, as everyone knows, even Bible verses must be spoken properly for the right reasons. Too often, Bible verses are used to offend others, defend oneself, or project a holier-than-thou attitude.

Christianity’s foundational teaching revolves around the fabricated doctrine of original sin. It is the bedrock of all subsequent doctrines invented that religion. Without the doctrine of original sin, there will be no need for a doctrine of salvation and everything else that comes after and in between. There will be no need to fabricate a story where God impregnates a virgin in order for him to be born as human to eventually sacrifice himself to himself and save humanity from himself.

Christianity’s doctrines are nothing but a convoluted mess of intricately woven teachings designed to adrenalize human fear to ensnare the unsuspecting masses with religiously crafted authoritative words inappropriately labeled as The Word of God.

Probably the most problematic subject in religion is about suffering, and no other book in the Bible expounded the problem of suffering like Job. The wisdom that the Book of Job conveyed is difficult to extract due to its imagery and voluminous words. Traditional

Christian writings about suffering emphasize that such is a punishment from God.

I will not go into the details but I will just point out two things that I have extracted from the Book of Job:

- Job was portrayed as a righteous man but he suffered much
- Job is not guilty of sin

THEREFORE:

- There is no inherent relationship between suffering and sin; no cause and effect equation. There is no indication that suffering is punishment from God

Scholars say that the Book of Job was the first book of the Bible written - 400 years older than the Book of Genesis. If the book was made to be the source of spiritual teachings, I contend it would reflect much of the deist philosophy. There are no mentions of the covenant, the Law of Moses, or the priesthood. There are not even any mentions of the Israelite people or the Promised Land. Instead, Job offers sacrifices for himself and for his sons without the use of a priesthood, temple, or consecrated altar. It is free from the elaborate doctrines formulated by religion. To me, this makes it clear that the writer has no religious baggage, but someone who knows philosophy and has deep spiritual understanding.

Christian doctrine points to sin as the cause of the suffering of men. The Genesis account in the garden punished Eve with pain in childbearing and Adam with hard labor. And thus begins the doctrinal drama of suffering and sin that has eluded the understanding of many for so long. From then on, the religious understanding of the sufferings of humanity has always been connected with the invented doctrine of original sin.

THE DEIST APPEAL OF THE BOOK OF JOB

First, Job is an ancient book about a gentile patriarch. His connection to the biblical greats in the lineage of Abraham is clearly absent, yet God made him the example for such a great story. Job's story is a big departure from the heavily Abraham-to-Jesus narrative of religious salvation.

Second, the book of Job has a strong sense of God's pleasure and delight in nature. For example, in God's reply to Job from the whirlwind in Ch. 38-42 -- please read. God also describes with pleasure the lives of various animals and his involvement in providing for their needs in Job 39:5-30.

“Who let the wild donkey go free? Who untied its ropes? I gave it the wasteland as its home, the salt flats as its habitat. It laughs at the commotion in the town; it does not hear a driver's shout. It ranges the hills for its pasture and searches for any green thing. Will the wild ox consent to serve you? Will it stay by your manger at night? Can you hold it to the furrow with a harness? Will it till the

valleys behind you? Will you rely on it for its great strength? Will you leave your heavy work to it? Can you trust it to haul in your grain and bring it to your threshing floor? The wings of the ostrich flap joyfully, though they cannot compare with the wings and feathers of the stork. She lays her eggs on the ground and lets them warm in the sand, unmindful that a foot may crush them, that some wild animal may trample them. She treats her young harshly as if they were not hers; she cares not that her labor was in vain, for God did not endow her with wisdom or give her a share of good sense. Yet when she spreads her feathers to run, she laughs at the horse and rider. Do you give the horse its strength or clothe its neck with a flowing mane? Do you make it leap like a locust, striking terror with its proud snorting? It paws fiercely, rejoicing in its strength, and charges into the fray. It laughs at fear, afraid of nothing; it does not shy away from the sword. The quiver rattles against its side, along with the flashing spear and lance. In frenzied excitement it eats up the ground; it cannot stand still when the trumpet sounds. At the blast of the trumpet, it snorts, 'Aha!' It catches the scent of battle from afar, the shout of commanders, and the battle cry. Does the hawk take flight by your wisdom and spread its wings toward the south? Does the eagle soar at your command and build its nest on high? It dwells on a cliff and stays there at night; a rocky crag is its stronghold. From there it looks for food; its eyes detect it from afar. Its young ones feast on blood, and where the slain are, there it is."

What does the Book of Job say about nature?

The Book of Job has a nuanced description of how God governs the natural world. The following verses give subtle insights that reflect the complex and interesting ways of God's control of nature.

Job 37:2-7 "Listen! Listen to the roar of his voice, to the rumbling that comes from his mouth. He unleashes his lightning beneath the whole heaven and sends it to the ends of the earth. After that comes the sound of his roar; he thunders with his majestic voice. When his voice resounds, he holds nothing back. God's voice thunders in marvelous ways; he does great things beyond our understanding. He says to the snow, 'Fall on the earth,' and to the rain shower, 'Be a mighty downpour.' So that everyone he has made may know his work, he stops all people from their labor."

With such flair and prose, the Book of Job supports strongly the deist belief that God has set the universe and nature on autopilot.

Job is commonly thought to be among the greatest wise men of bygone times. He was certainly well educated as evidenced by his broad vocabulary. He has a vast knowledge of nature and knows well the habits of animals. He was familiar with precious stones, listing over thirteen by name. He understood weather patterns and could read the stars. He also described mining, hunting, and trapping practices of ancient times. He was well-versed in many cultures, especially Egypt. He was, of course, very spiritually-minded.

Job's struggle is like what still prevails in modern days -- understanding the disconnect between a just God and unjust circumstances. The deist answer is simple: the disconnect is not because of sin but because of the spontaneous operation of nature, which is something humanity must understand and learn to navigate. We live in a world that is continually moving, some things ending and some things beginning, all things evolving. We live in a physical world governed by physical laws.

To the deist, the mind of God which gave us reason, intellect, and common sense is that we learn to live with nature. Understand how it operates, comprehend how its different components act or react to different stimuli, and use our accumulated understanding to make our lives better. Humanity has already achieved considerable advances in science and technology; it's about time that our understanding and spirituality catch up with such developments -- in the deism way.



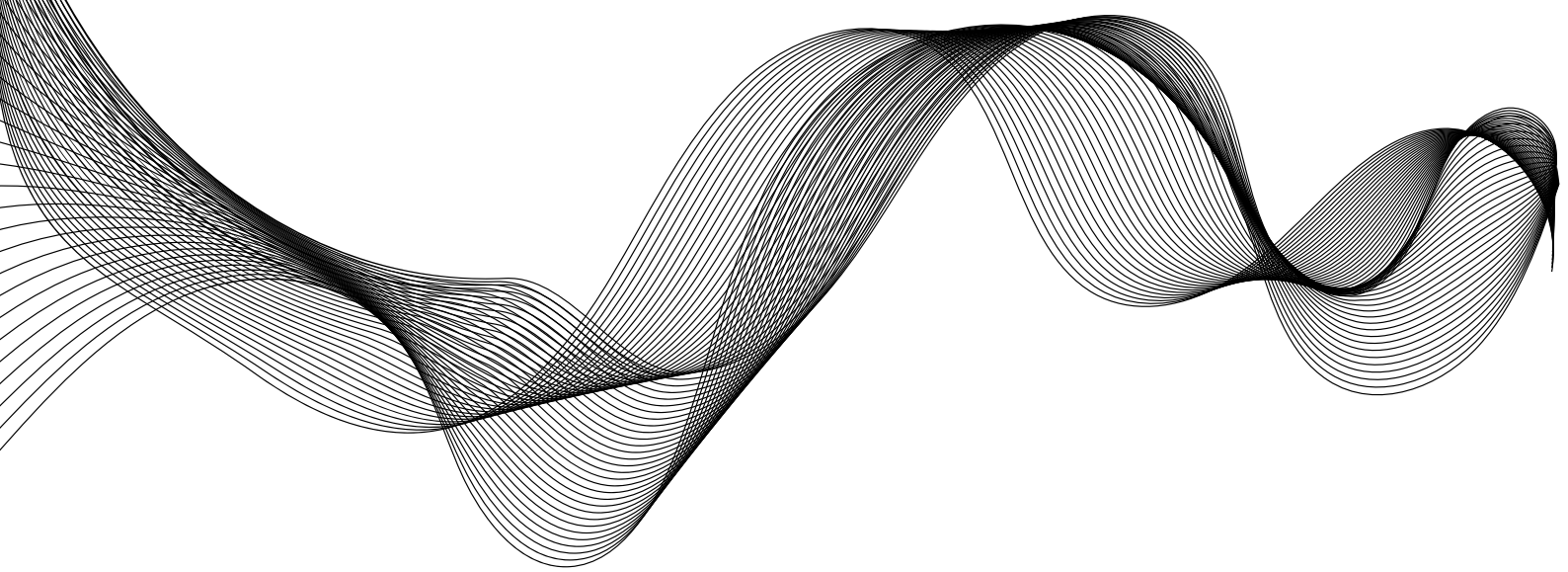
Jose Rizal

“Humanity is my religion.”

Jose Rizal, the Philippine national hero, made significant contributions to Deism through his writings and advocacy for reason, science, and secularism. In his novels, Noli Me Tangere and El Filibusterismo, Rizal critiqued organized religion and the abuses

of the clergy, promoting a rational and ethical approach to life and governance. His belief in a Creator who could be understood through reason and observation, rather than dogma, reflected Deistic principles. Rizal’s emphasis on education and enlightenment helped foster a sense of nationalism and encouraged Filipinos to seek a personal relationship with God, free from the constraints of colonial religious authorities.

His advocacy for reform and social justice also aligned with the moral dimensions of Deism, emphasizing the importance of human dignity and rational thought in the pursuit of progress.



TEN: THE EVOLUTION OF THE CONCEPT OF GOD IN HUMAN UNDERSTANDING

The word “God,” in any language, encapsulates the concept of a creator who is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and eternal. Born out of humanity’s curiosity and fear of the unknown, the concept of God in the Bible grew exponentially and has changed a lot over time.

The vast and varied concepts of God throughout history followed a dynamic development where religious beliefs have changed in multiple ways. Humanity generally conceptualized their gods in relation to their culture, environment, and all other factors present in their particular place and time. Human spirituality is a fascinating journey that reflects our own cultural, societal, intellectual, and philosophical development.

THE EARLY CONCEPTS OF GOD

At the beginning of our history, humans looked to the invisible to understand the mystifying and puzzling phenomena that are observed every day in nature. What are the sun, the moon, and the stars and why do they move the way they do? Are there invisible forces that create lightning, thunders, and rain? Who moves

the earth during earthquakes? When there are volcanic explosions, did man offend a god in any way? Are there invisible forces that cause physical things to move in such a way that they harm humans?

Natural forces at work led to the emergence of reverence or fear among humans and gave birth to animism. Spirits are believed to indwell mountains, rivers, trees, rocks, and just any other object where something mystifying may have happened. Different societies worshiped various gods and assigned them dominion over different aspects of life and the environment. These early beliefs laid the groundwork for later developments of religions.

Animism and the Personification of Nature

Animism, one of the earliest forms of religion, is based on the belief that all things, including inanimate objects, possess a spirit or soul. This spiritual perspective fostered a deep connection between humans and their environment, with each rock, tree, and river seen as a living entity. This personification of nature led to the development of the concept of anthropomorphic gods.

Polytheism: A Pantheon of Deities

The polytheistic traditions of ancient civilizations like the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans introduced a pantheon of gods, each representing a facet of human life and the cosmos. This fostered the era of Greek,

Egyptian, and Roman gods and goddesses. With knowledge of the heavens in its infancy, Gods were named after the planets then known to humans. The concept of Gods was no longer limited to earthly concepts but catapulted to the heavens. This plurality of gods mirrored the complexities of the natural world and human society.

The Shift to Monotheism

As civilizations evolved, so too did their religious beliefs. The idea of a single, all-powerful deity began to take hold, offering a more unified and omnipotent figure that could embody the entirety of existence and moral law. This transition from many gods to one supreme God probably started with the Zoroastrians in Persia. The Bible character Daniel may have greatly influenced Jews of the dispersion who went back to Palestine and took with them the idea of monotheism.

The Rise of Abrahamic Faiths

The emergence of the Abrahamic faiths—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—marked a significant shift in religious thought. Here, the concept of God evolved into a singular, omniscient creator, governing the universe with absolute authority. These monotheistic religions profoundly influenced the cultural, philosophical, and religious landscape of humanity.

Philosophical Developments and the Evolution of the Concept of God

As philosophy and theology began to intersect, thinkers attempted to reconcile the existence of God with reason and empirical evidence. The Middle Ages and the Enlightenment brought about significant debate and discourse regarding the nature of God and His relationship to an increasingly scientific world.

The Middle Ages: Faith and Reason

St. Thomas Aquinas blended Aristotelian philosophy with Christian theology, proposing that reason and faith are complementary. Aquinas's Five Ways attempted to logically prove God's existence, shaping the philosophical dialogue around the Divine. The *Quinque viæ* (Latin for "Five Ways") (sometimes called "five proofs") are five logical arguments for the existence of God summarized Thomas Aquinas in his book *Summa Theologica*.

The Enlightenment: Questioning and Critique

The Enlightenment era saw a surge in skepticism as philosophers questioned traditional religious beliefs. Figures like David Hume and Immanuel Kant critiqued the rational arguments for God's existence, emphasizing empirical knowledge and human perception.

Contemporary Interpretations of God

In the modern era, the concept of God continues to evolve. Theological and philosophical discourse has expanded to include perspectives from a diverse range of cultures and beliefs, reflecting the pluralistic nature of our global community.

Process Theology and Open Theism

Process theology and open theism present God as dynamic and changing, interacting with the world and its inhabitants in a relational manner. This contrasts with classical views of God's immutability and challenges us to rethink divine power and knowledge in light of contemporary understandings of the universe.

Atheism and Agnosticism

The rise of atheism and agnosticism represents another facet of modern thought, with some arguing against the existence of God or claiming that divine existence is unknowable. This skepticism has sparked rich dialogue and debate within philosophical and religious communities.

The Ongoing Dialogue Between Faith and Reason

The evolution of the concept of God is not merely a historical curiosity but a living, breathing dialogue that continues to shape how we understand our world and

ourselves. As we advance in knowledge and experience, the conversation between faith and reason becomes ever more intricate and vital.

Integrating Science and Spirituality

Today, many theologians and philosophers seek to integrate scientific understanding with spiritual beliefs, exploring how concepts like the Big Bang and evolution can coexist with the notion of a creator. This integration attempts to bridge the gap between empirical evidence and spiritual understanding, enriching both realms of thought.

Deism Rising -- The Rational Option

The evolution of the concept of God in human understanding is a testament to our quest for meaning and our ability to adapt our beliefs to new knowledge. As we continue to explore the mysteries of existence, the concept of God may further transform, reflecting the limitless potential of human thought and imagination.

Adopted from:

<https://philosophy.institute/philosophy-of-religion/evolution-of-god-human-understanding/>

JOSE RIZAL: THE FOREMOST FILIPINO DEIST

The seeds of Deism in the Philippines may have been planted during the early days of the revolution against Spain. I have mentioned earlier the names of some Filipino heroes who were Freemasons. Further research revealed that almost all of our heroes during the revolutions against Spain and America were Freemasons.

One can read Rizal's exposition on this subject in his correspondence with a Jesuit priest, Fr. Pablo Pastells, who was actually his spiritual director during his youthful years in Ateneo. The exchange occurred when Rizal was in an exile in Dapitan and when Fr. Pastells was already the Superior of the Philippine Mission of the Society of Jesus.

In his third letter to Pastells, Jose Rizal explained:
“Through reasoning and by necessity, rather than through faith, do I firmly believe in the existence of a creative Being. Who is he? I do not know. What human sounds, what accents are we to use in pronouncing the name of this Being whose works overwhelm the imagination? Can anyone give him an adequate name, when a small creature on this earth with power so fleeting carries two or three names, three or four surnames, and many more titles and designations? We call him Diyos but this only comes from the Latin Deus and ultimately from the Greek Zeus. What kind of being is he? I would attribute to him, to an infinite degree, all

the beautiful and holy qualities my mind can think of, but the fear of my ignorance constrains me. Someone has said that everyone conjures up his own God in his own image and likeness. And if my memory serves me right, it was Anacreon who said that if a bull could form an image of God, it would imagine with horns and mooing in a superlative degree. Even so I venture to think of him as infinitely wise, mighty, good (my idea of the infinite is imperfect and confused), when I behold the wonders of his works, the order that reigns over the universe, the magnificence and expanse of creation, and the goodness that shines in all.”

“Unable to pass judgement on what surpasses my powers, I settle for studying God in his creatures like myself and in the voice of my conscience, which only can have come from him. I strive to read and find his will in all that surrounds me and in the mysterious sentiment speaking from within me, which I strive to purify above all else.”

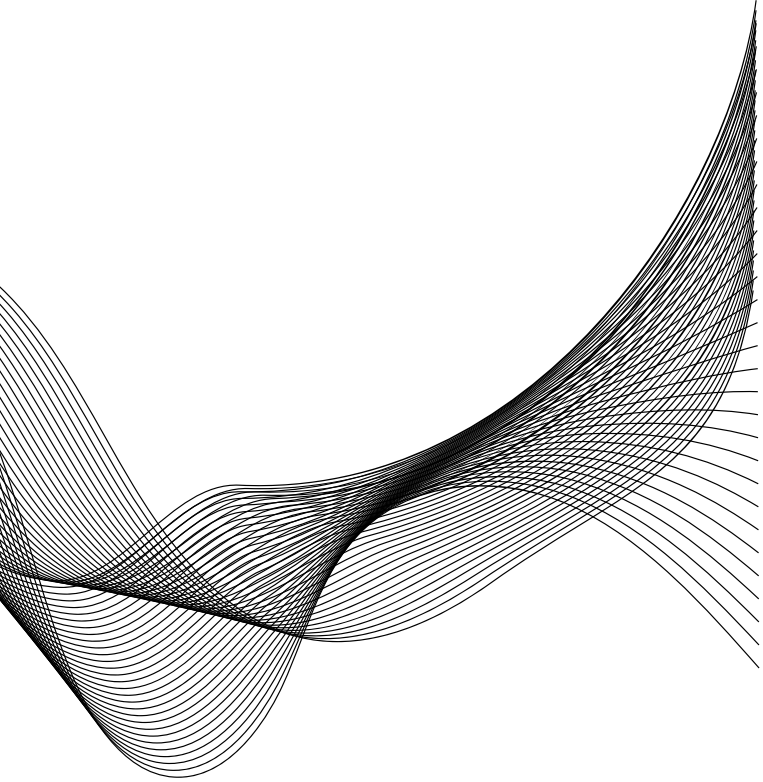
Thus, Rizal’s belief in a Deity was based on reasonable reflection of nature as well as from conscience and not on faith or divine revelation. On the same letter, Rizal expressed his disbelief on the teachings of ancient sacred books. He writes: *“The various religions claim to have God’s will condensed and written in books and dogmas; but apart from the many contradictions, conflicting interpretations of words, and many obscure and untenable points I find in them, my conscience, my reason cannot admit that he who like a wise father had*

provided his creatures with everything necessary for this life, proceeded to bury what was necessary for eternal life in the obscurities of a language unknown to the rest of the world and hide it behind metaphors and deeds that go against the very laws of nature. Is it possible that he who makes the sun rise for all and the air to blow everywhere to give life, he who has endowed everyone with intelligence and reason for life here on earth, has also hidden from us what is most necessary for our eternal life?

What shall we say of a father who heaps candies and toys on his children, but gives food only to one of them, educates and rears him alone? And what if it so happens that this chosen one refuses to eat while the others die looking for food?"

But Rizal goes to qualify his denial of revelation. He only denied special revelation that came through ancient books or traditions. He pointed it out in his fourth letter to Fr. Pastells that: *"I believe in revelation, but in the living revelation of nature which surrounds us everywhere, in the voice speaking out through nature – powerful, eternal, incorruptible, clear, distinct, and universal as the Being from which it comes. It is this revelation that I believe in, which speaks to us and penetrates our being from the day we are born to the day we die. Can any other books reveal to us more faithfully God's work, his goodness, his love, his providence, his eternity, his glory, his wisdom? 'The heavens tell the glory of the Lord, and the firmament*

proclaims his handiwork. Ps 19:1' Must humanity look for other gospels in order to love God? Do you not believe that men did wrong when they looked for God's will in scrolls and temples instead of the wonders of nature under the majestic canopy of the skies? Instead of interpreting obscure passages or phrases which provoked hatreds, wars, and dissensions, would it not have been preferable to interpret the facts of nature the better to shape our lives according to its inviolable laws and utilize its resources for our perfection?"



PART THREE:

SPIRITUALITY IN THE AGE OF CONTINUING ENLIGHTENMENT

God, as a philosophical idea, is the belief that the Supreme Being exists (or must exist) independent of the teachings or revelations of any particular religion. It represents belief in God entirely without doctrine, or creeds, except for that which can be discerned by reason and the contemplation of natural laws.

In Philosophy, energy is that from which the whole manifest universe arises, causal, subtle, and physical, which can be experienced through its manifestations. It is the indestructible force that holds the universe together. If energy cannot be destroyed, it must be a real existing thing. If its form changes, it must be something real as well. It may exist in potential, kinetic, thermal, electrical, chemical, nuclear, or other forms.



René Descartes

“The existence of God is self-evident.”

René Descartes significantly contributed to Deism through his emphasis on reason and the existence of a rational God. His method of doubt, encapsulated in the phrase Cogito Ergo Sum (I think, therefore I am), promoted the idea that knowledge is built on rational thought rather than religious dogma. In works like Meditations on First Philosophy, he argued for the existence of God, claiming that the idea of a perfect being must originate from a perfect source. His rationalist approach and belief in a universe governed by natural laws influenced later Deistic thinkers, encouraging the understanding of the divine through reason and the natural world.



ELEVEN: HOW DO WE DETERMINE TRUTH?

"There is no truth. There is only perception,"
Gustave Flaubert

The quote speaks to a profound philosophical view on the nature of reality and human understanding. Flaubert suggests that what we often consider to be "truth" is, in reality, subjective and shaped by individual perspectives.

"I do not believe in believing, my approach is to know, and knowing is a totally different dimension. It starts from doubt, it does not start from believing. The moment you start believing you have stopped inquiring. Belief is one of the most poisonous things to destroy human intelligence. All religions are based on beliefs, only science is based on doubt.
Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh

"The truth is not for all men
but only for those who seek it."
Ayn Rand

Truth must not be mysterious. It should be understood for that which is not understood cannot be known to be true. Truth must be plain, not very strange, not cryptic or impossible to explain.

Religious doctrines that are blatantly admitted to be “mysteries” should not be declared or acknowledged to be true. To such belong the “mysteries” of the Faith of the Catholic Church and others that adopted them. "The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith and life. Since its adoption for almost 2000 years, this doctrine remains beyond explanation, beyond understanding, and beyond common sense.

The only things that do not change in this universe are nature and the laws that govern them. The laws of nature reflect the orderly and wondrous intentions, the wisdom, and the providence of God. The mechanisms (activities) of nature show a universe that is alive, responsive, constantly moving, reproducing, sustaining, evolving, full of energy, and life-giving. Except in the area of anthropomorphism (man-like image and emotions), all the characteristics of the gods of religions can be observed to be possessed by the universe/nature. A fundamental shift in our thinking is all that is needed to see the truth that the universe/nature is God.

There have been many changes in how humans look at the world. In particular, we changed our thinking about the cosmos/universe and the natural order of what is out there to be known. Not only did we discover the stars and galaxies beyond what the naked eye can see but we also discovered the universe of the invisible;

atoms, photons, electrons, neutrinos, quarks, etc. Science now believes that we are near the time when questions like "Where did we come from", "Is there a God", and "What is God", can be answered scientifically. This is due to the fact that nature has not changed since the time of creation. As humans discover the secrets of nature, we come to understand that its laws and properties remain the same. They are the same yesterday, today, and forever. They are unchangeable, immutable, and always constant. For the deists-pantheists, such attributes speak of the universal attributes of God. Will science come to the conclusion that the universe/nature is the elusive God humanity has been searching for?

When religions use the word truth, they refer to the concept created to embody their beliefs. The worst allusion to the word truth, however, was when Christianity assigned the word to a person -- Jesus. What was just a concept became a person. In the same manner, they also hijacked the Greek word "logos" and converted it into a person.

Here's an excerpt from Encyclopedia Britannica:

"Logos, in ancient Greek philosophy and early Christian theology, refers to the divine reason implicit in the cosmos, ordering it and giving it form and meaning. Although the concept is also found in Indian, Egyptian, and Persian philosophical and theological systems, it became particularly significant in Christian writings and

doctrines as a vehicle for conceiving the role of Jesus as the principle of God active in the creation and the continuous structuring of the cosmos and in revealing the divine plan of salvation to human beings. It thus underlies the basic Christian doctrine of the preexistence of Jesus.

The idea of logos in Greek thought goes back at least to the 6th-century-BCE philosopher Heraclitus, who discerned in the cosmic process a logos analogous to the reasoning power in humans. Later, the Stoics, philosophers who followed the teachings of the thinker Zeno of Citium (4th–3rd century BCE), defined the logos as an active rational and spiritual principle that permeated all reality. They called the logos providence, nature, god, and the soul of the universe.”

Philo Judaeus (Philo of Alexandria), a 1st-century-CE Jewish philosopher, taught that the logos was the intermediary between God and the cosmos, being both the agent of creation and the agent through which the human mind can apprehend and comprehend God. According to Philo (who interpreted in religious terms the teachings of Plato), the logos was both immanent in the world and at the same time the transcendent divine mind.

As the first to attempt to synthesize revealed faith and philosophic reason, Philo occupies a unique position in the history of philosophy and religion. He is regarded by Christians as a forerunner of Christian theology.

In the Gospel of John, the concept of the logos was anthropomorphized and thus, what was a concept or principle in the Greek thought -- *logos* -- evolved and became a person in the Christian doctrine.

(Was Philo actually the author of the Gospel of John? I think so. Remember, the apostle John was an illiterate.)

In Philosophy, we also use the word “truth” when we’re actually referring to “absolute truth.” Absolute truth is any statement that accurately reflects reality at all times and places. For example, it is always true that circles are round and that the sum of the angles of any Euclidean triangle is 180 degrees. It is always true that water molecules are combinations of hydrogen and oxygen, and table salt is always a combination of sodium and chlorine.

Should I have the knowledge and understanding I can go on and mention what composes certain kinds of metals, liquids, plasma, or any other physical matter found in nature and that they are the same substance in the past, the present, and the future. Oxygen is always oxygen in the same manner that carbon has always been carbon. Those are absolute truths.

What is my point here? Absolute truth can only be ascribed to things that do not change for eternity, and, in our physical situation, such can only be ascribed to

physical things -- things that can be proven to exist by our natural senses.

Religious doctrines are nothing but concepts or fabrications and cannot be considered absolute truth. Study the history of doctrines and find out that they are not eternal. They don't have a past that goes back to the beginning of time and they have been changed or modified also at certain times. The most revered doctrines of Christianity do not go back to the time of creation but are clearly the fabrications of religion. The doctrines that accompany the names Jesus, Krishna, Allah, Elohim, etc. were nothing but literary constructs of religions. Clearly, the phrase "absolute truth" can not be applied to them.

Absolute truth is a statement that is true at all times and in all places. It is something that is always true no matter what the circumstances. It is a fact that cannot be changed.

Religious truth is totally another matter; they can not be proven to be true. There is no religious truth that is universally accepted and applied. Their importance or significance is dependent subjectively upon how people appreciate them. Unlike gold or diamond that will always be gold or diamond however and whoever will be looking at them, wherever they may be. On the contrary, religious doctrines could be precious to one but will be considered trash by another. Religious

doctrines have no universal appeal. Religious truths are all fabrications, just like the religions that carry them.

Christians love the words of Jesus saying, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Do they know that there were other claimants of such statements, or parts of it, that preceded Jesus? Do we even reckon that acceptance of such words were subjective? Jesus is a different person in someone else's religion. Even in Christianity alone, Jesus is perceived differently in various sects.

The religion Taoism is also known as "the way." The concept of Anekantvad in Jainism teaches how to arrive at the absolute truth. In suffism, Al Hallaj is popularly known to have claimed that he is the truth. Lastly, Hinduism is also known as "a way of life". In essence, the amalgamation of the words "way, truth, and life" was a clever Christian construct of bringing under one person the significant tenets of different religions.

The concept of absolute truth challenges the relativistic perspective that truth is subjective and varies from person to person. Absolute truth proponents argue that there are objective facts that exist regardless of individual viewpoints.

In philosophy, "absolute truth" refers to the concept that there exists a singular, objective, and unchanging reality or set of truths that exist independently of human perception, belief, or interpretation. It represents the idea that certain facts or principles are

universally and eternally valid, irrespective of individual viewpoints, cultural variations, or historical contexts.

Key characteristics of absolute truth in philosophy include:

- **Universality:** Absolute truth is not subject to variation or relativity. It applies universally and consistently to all individuals, regardless of their cultural or personal perspectives.
- **Objectivity:** It is an objective reality that stands apart from subjective beliefs or opinions. Absolute truth exists independently of human interpretation.
- **Immutability:** Absolute truth remains constant and unchanging over time. It is not influenced by historical or temporal factors.
- **Certainty:** Absolute truth is considered the most certain form of knowledge, as it is not contingent on subjective or provisional judgments.

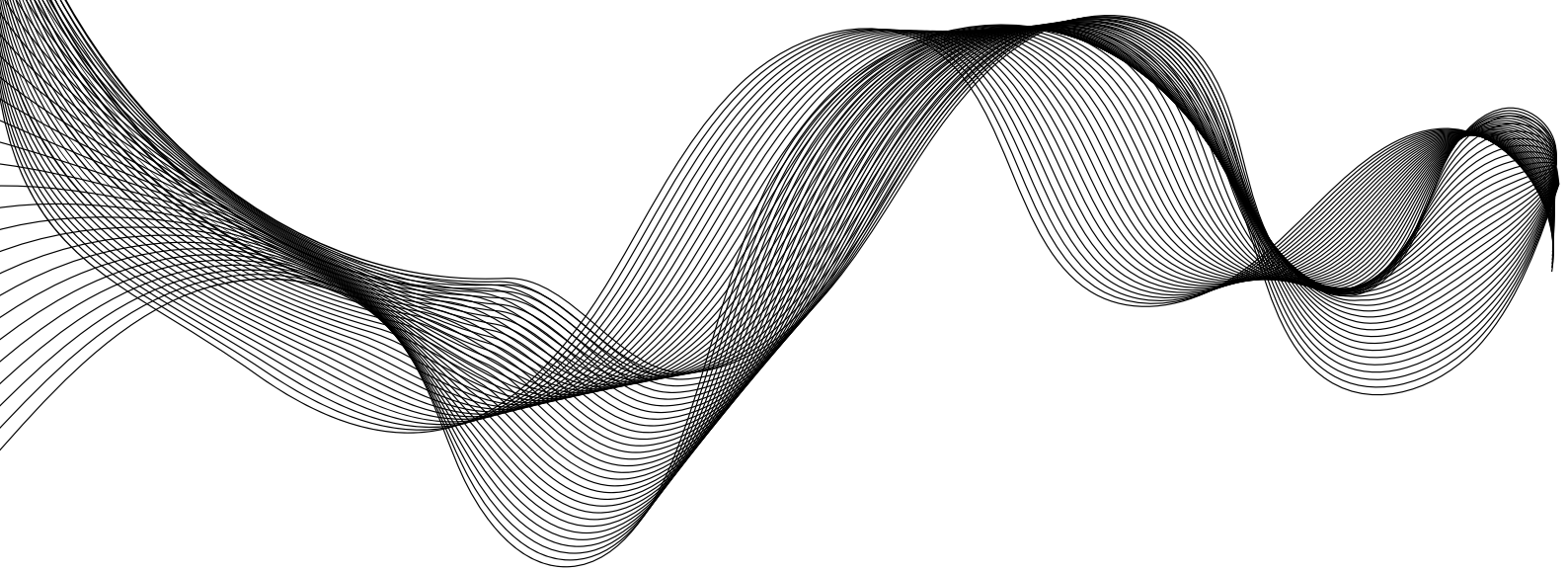
Philosophy and religion define truth in different ways. The complexity of that simple word must be reckoned with. Truth in philosophy is based on reason that requires proof, while truth in religion are fabrications, is based on faith, and does not require proof.



Voltaire

"Nature is the source of all true knowledge. She has her own logic, her own laws; she has no effect without cause nor invention without necessity."

*Voltaire significantly contributed to Deism through his critique of organized religion and his advocacy for reason, tolerance, and freedom of thought. As a prominent Enlightenment thinker, he championed the use of reason as the foundation for understanding God and morality, arguing against religious dogma and superstition. In his writings, such as *Candide* and *Philosophical Dictionary*, Voltaire emphasized the belief in a rational deity who created the universe but does not intervene in human affairs, a core tenet of Deism. His famous motto, *Écrasez infâme* (crush the infamous thing), reflects his desire to challenge oppressive religious institutions and promote a more rational approach to spirituality. Through his advocacy for civil liberties and religious tolerance, Voltaire laid the groundwork for modern secular thought and influenced the development of Deism as a legitimate worldview.*



TWELVE: CAN RELIGION, SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY AGREE?

Being religious, or simply the act of being in a religion, is also participating in philosophical thought, as religion revolves around philosophy. Philosophy is the study of thought, or general questions about existence and things inside it

What is the main subject of philosophy?

Philosophy is “the study of thought” concerning nature, metaphysics, ethics, aesthetics, being, knowledge, logic, and all manner of theory. “Philosophy” comes from Greek words meaning “love of wisdom.” Philosophy uses the tools of logic and reason to analyze the ways in which humans experience the world.

Faith (religion) is the belief in something that does not require any evidence and may not be provable by any empirical or rational means. By its popular Biblical definition, faith is the evidence of things not seen. Faith is believing something to be true without any proof. Faith then is an emotional decision.

Science is the pursuit and application of knowledge and understanding of the natural and social world following a systematic methodology based on evidence.

By the above definitions, we can see that science and philosophy require reason, logic, and everything that can be resorted to to prove the veracity of a thought, principle, or hypothesis. Faith, on the contrary, accepts unproven assumptions, theories, or hypotheses as true. Such is the nature of religious mysteries. Implemented by the power of the church, it is considered heretical to even raise a question or ask for an explanation.

Religion has historically been at odds with science and philosophy, often at the price of blood. The power of the sword given to the church has served as the strongest deterrent to the advancement of knowledge and scientific discovery for thousands of years.

But that is changing, and deism in its inroads in various fields is at the forefront of such change. Deists who were scientists, educators, philosophers, politicians, etc, championed the rise of a more rational society worldwide. The grip of the dark world of religions is now being effectively superseded by movements that are more open to the quest for knowledge and truth.

The world has now awakened to the concept that the word "God" is not a name or a person, and neither are any of its equivalents in various languages, dialects, and philosophies. It is a concept or philosophical idea that the Supreme Being exists (or must exist) independent of the teachings or revelations of any particular religion. It represents belief in a Supreme Being entirely without doctrine or creeds, except for that which can be

discerned by reason and the contemplation of natural laws.

In Philosophy, energy is that from which the whole manifest universe arises, causal, subtle, and physical, which can be experienced through its manifestations. It is the indestructible force that holds the universe together. If energy cannot be destroyed, it must be a real existing thing. If its form changes, it must be something real as well. It may exist in potential, kinetic, thermal, electrical, chemical, nuclear, or other forms.

Measuring or comparing energy vis-a-vis the eternal, omnipresent, omnipotence, and omniscient attributes of God, we find that, from what we know and understand of both, energy is as eternal, omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient as God. Hence, in the next chapter we ask the question, "Is energy God?"

For those who want to read:

https://science.osti.gov/.../pdfs/quantum_universe_gr.pdf

Excerpts:

The Quantum theory of God says there exists a universal energy that has the attributes of God. This energy has consciousness, intelligence and creativity. All matter is composed of this energy.

Cosmological space observations have revealed that 95 percent of the universe is not made of ordinary matter

but of a mysterious something else: dark matter and dark energy. In other words, with all the accumulated knowledge of what we now know of the Universe, that accumulation is probably just about 5% of what can be known; the remaining 95% is still a mystery, unknown.

Scientists say most of the matter in the universe is dark. Without dark matter, galaxies and stars would not have formed and life would not exist. It holds the universe together. But what is dark matter?

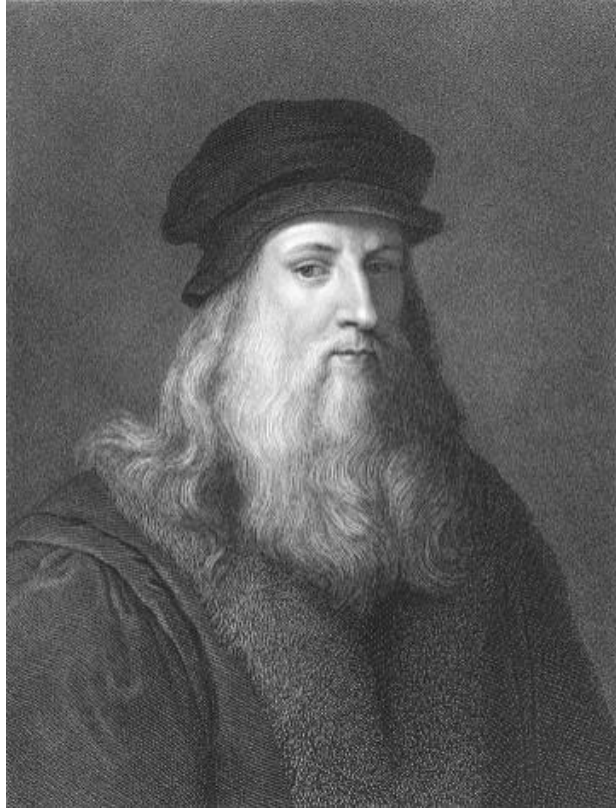
Ubiquitous, elusive, and full of surprises, neutrinos are the most mysterious of the known particles in the universe. They interact so weakly with other particles that trillions of them pass through our bodies each second without leaving a trace. The sun shines brightly in neutrinos, produced in the internal fusion reactions that power the sun. These reactions produce neutrinos of only one kind, but they mysteriously morph into two other kinds on their way to earth. Neutrinos have mass, but the heaviest neutrino is at least a million times lighter than the lightest charged particle.

What started the Big Bang? How did space, time, matter, and energy take the forms that we see today? Can science work backward to unravel the history of the universe? What will man discover if and when knowledge would have brought humanity to the time of creation? Will man find God?

NOTHING IS EVERYTHING

Quantum physics has revealed a stunning truth about “nothing.” Even the emptiest vacuum is filled with elementary particles, continually created and destroyed. Particles appear and disappear, flying apart and coming together, in an intricate quantum dance.

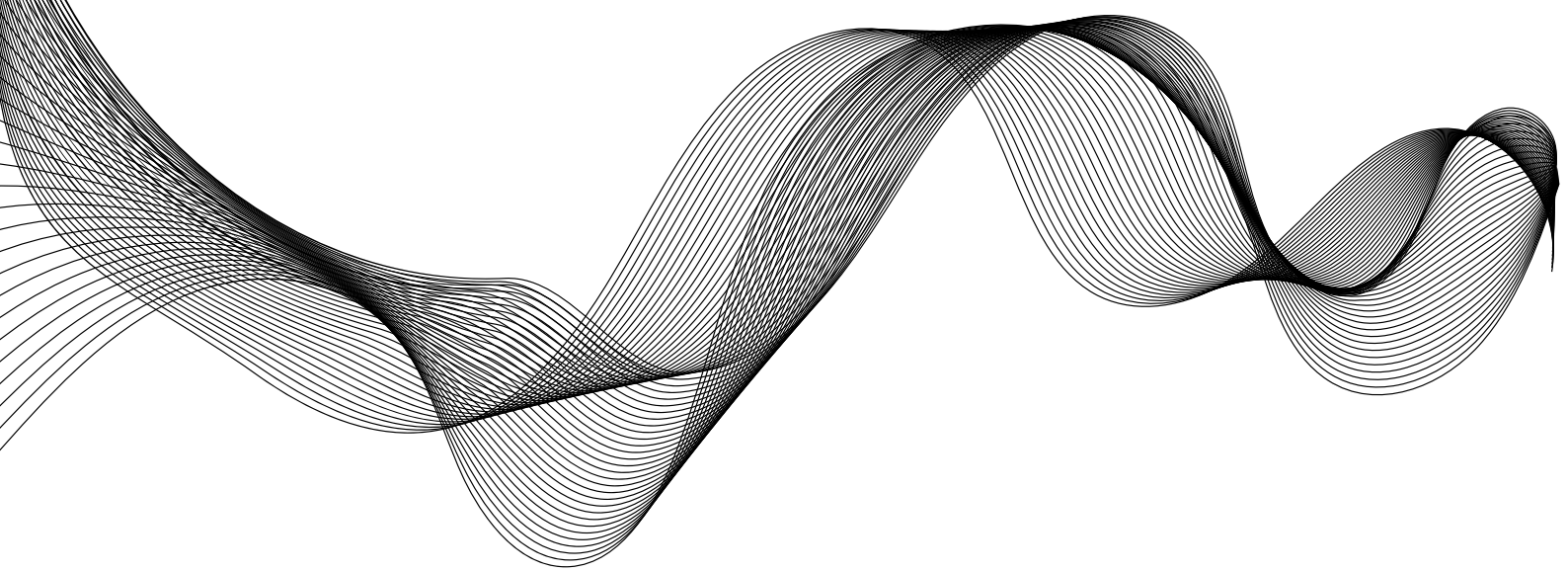
Religion and philosophy agree upon the truths of natural science. Natural science is true and the same everywhere; it can not be altered, modified, edited, or changed to fit any man-made manipulations. Natural science is a unifying truth amid the diversities of human perspectives. Our common ground is set by nature's laws and reality principles. For the deists, though we worship differently in different creeds, temples, mosques, and churches, we all worship the same creator - the God of nature, the Divine Energy that created the Universe.



Leonardo da Vinci

Leonardo da Vinci influenced deism through his approach to understanding the natural world via observation and reason. His dedication to studying nature independently of religious doctrine suggested a universe governed by logical, natural laws, aligning with deistic views of a rational creator.

By emphasizing human potential and scientific inquiry, da Vinci's work laid foundational ideas that Enlightenment thinkers later expanded upon in their deistic philosophies.



THIRTEEN: IS ENERGY GOD?

There is something dynamic about words. Different words can mean the same thing. To the skilled writer, the play of words is like an art to express some thoughts in so many ways but they can convey the same meaning anyway. This is true in any language and, with the world becoming more and more united in language, especially in science and technology, the barriers to understanding have become much less between people of different cultures. Science and technology have given the world a new language helping people to understand each other easier. There is less need for translations as the world is becoming more technical and scientific in giving names to new inventions, thoughts, and discoveries. New words like gigabytes, modem, and laptop are as easily understood in any language as the hallelujahs and Coca-Cola of earlier days.

Gone were the days when the word energy was without a clear definition. There was no understanding of its existence, its beginning or end, if any. Is it unlimited or finite? How is it produced? Can it be conserved? What caused the energy build-up that resulted in the Big Bang and started all this creation?

Now we know that energy can neither be created nor destroyed but can be converted from one form to the other.

To be clear, I am not a scientist, physicist, or philosopher. I don't claim any expertise in such fields of study. I am just a learner, a student, a seeker. I am just a simple man in a journey of spiritual discovery.

In a parallel article, I asked, "Is the Universe God?" This time I am asking. "Is Energy God?"

The two questions are essentially one and the same. While the Universe has a material component, scientists now say that the Universe is 95+% immaterial. Accounting for the sizes of protons, neutrons, and electrons, most of the volume of an atom—greater than 99 percent—is, in fact, empty space. That means that even what we see as solid things are in fact mostly empty spaces. Tables, chairs, beds, rocks, plastics, and metals have mostly empty spaces in them. Despite all this empty space, solid objects do not just pass through one another. The electrons that surround all atoms are negatively charged and cause atoms to repel one another, preventing atoms from occupying the same space. These intermolecular forces prevent things from passing through each other though 99% of them are empty spaces. Since atoms are full of energy, scientists now refer to this immaterial component as "Dark Energy".

Following the Pantheistic philosophy of the transcendence of God, is this dark energy the elusive God man has been seeking?

The first law of thermodynamics states that energy can neither be created nor destroyed, only altered in form. The first law of thermodynamics states that the energy of the universe remains the same. Though it may be exchanged between the system and the surroundings, it can't be created or destroyed.

Energy can take physical as well as immaterial forms. A piece of dry wood is energy in physical form; it is inert and inactive. It is lifeless according to layman's definition, but within that dry wood is the power to burn with much heat, or energize something. That dry wood has life stored in it, only that it is conserved.

All matter is energy. Most of the energy man observes every day is in material form, mostly at rest. Soil, land, rocks, minerals, metals -- all at rest relative to man's perceptive capacity through his natural senses. However, observed under instruments brought by scientific advancements, man now sees the microscopic, the invisible, and imperceptible by the natural senses. With the use of such advanced tools and means available to man, the invisible has become visible. The smallest particles that make up the physical world - atoms, etc - are constantly in motion. They are alive and constantly interacting with each other.

Is Energy Omniscient?

Energy, in observable matter, displays intelligence. Take the example of food. Food eaten by cats becomes their bodies, and food eaten by dogs becomes their bodies. The food might be the same but when ingested, their composition becomes the same with their host. They adapt, copy, imbibe, duplicate, and imitate the nature of their new host. There is nothing that energy does not know though we do not know what energy knows. Scientists conduct research to learn what energy is further capable of beyond what we already know.

Let us consider the physical development of human beings. From the food they eat comes the development of their whole being - eyes, hands, feet, face, blood, brains, etc. What were brains before man ate them? From the food they have eaten were formed the brains that made them able to learn. That intellectual capacity is transferred to them by the very food they have eaten -- a transferred capacity from nature, an energy that has mutated to become useful in their new home. We are what we eat -- flesh, emotions, intellect, senses -- all from nature, all energy that has transformed into what we are in the present.

What humanity has learned on the atomic and sub-atomic levels of matter also displays a lot of intelligence. With my basic understanding, I can only talk about the union of common things like sodium and chlorine, both

poisonous, becoming table salt, or that of the union of oxygen and hydrogen becoming water, etc. Elements have behaviors that are constant and predictable. Elements made into medicines, fabrics, useful instruments, etc., follow a certain "discipline". The telecommunications industry, along with other advancements in communication devices, has made inert matter responsive to the intelligent devices of men. The interaction is no less than one intelligence reacting to the actions of another.

Carry this notion to the planetary, galactic, and universal level and we see design and intelligence displayed in its glory. Allow me to quote from Psalms 19:1-4 where we see the universe communicating in the language uniquely its own. -- "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge. They have no speech, they use no words; no sound is heard from them. Yet their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."

Applying the other universally accepted attributes of God which are: eternal, omnipresence, and omnipotence, we find that energy fits the description.

God and Energy are Eternal

God has no beginning and no end. So does energy: It was there at the time the universe exploded and it

continues to be there. God and energy have been around before creation and will continue to be around for eternity.

God and Energy are Omnipresent

Energy is all-pervasive, just as is God. There is no place in the universe where energy is absent. Energy may be of very high intensity, as in the case of stars like our sun. It may be of low intensity, as in the case of inert beings like metals and rocks, and though it is bottled up inside they are released when you break them. Energy is also very low in outer space.

God and Energy are Omnipotent

Energy is omnipotent, just like the God. If you know how to harness the energy, you can practically do anything. Airplanes are flying because of energy. Cars are running because of the energy. We have electricity in our homes because of the energy. Everything in the universe runs and functions because of energy. Even human beings and animals live and work because of energy. The moment energy goes out of our body, we are dead.

Energy cannot be seen, even as God is invisible! Both are never seen, and both can only be felt. Scientists called this invisible force energy, and religionists called it God or something else. Now what is wrong in calling energy as God? The words may be different but the

meaning of the language is the same. Energy is God, and God is Energy!

Scientists today are still learning more about energy. Likewise, the equation $E = mc^2$ appears to be magical, as any other formula physicists use. Understanding these concepts properly is not easy but as more work is carried out in the scientific and the philosophic fields, the time will come when the concepts of energy and God will eventually fuse together. The science of naming, describing, and classifying matters in the universe may merge things that are first thought to be different are actually the same. It is just in the language that we define things that make them appear different.

Have you ever handled a jigsaw puzzle? Did you see the complete picture on the box before you attempted to work on the pieces? Maybe you saw a field with a number of animals, trees, flowers, etc. But when you opened the box, there were just small pieces of different shapes and colors. Did you feel cheated or victimized by a fraud?

Of course not! The beauty in the thing is the fact that you now have to use your creativity to put the pieces together and create the beauty you have seen in the picture. That is the beauty of discovering God in nature. He painted/embedded Himself in the things that are around us. Now we see just pieces but as we learn and understand more of His creation, we also begin to see more of Him in his majesty and grandeur.

Call Him any way you want as it is man who invents language. There is no language on earth handed down by God; not a single word, not even His name, and definitely no sacred book called The Word God. There is nothing in this universe that can be as close as energy to the universally accepted attributes of God. It was there before human beings evolved. Human beings invented language and then decided to name everything, and also created the word GOD.



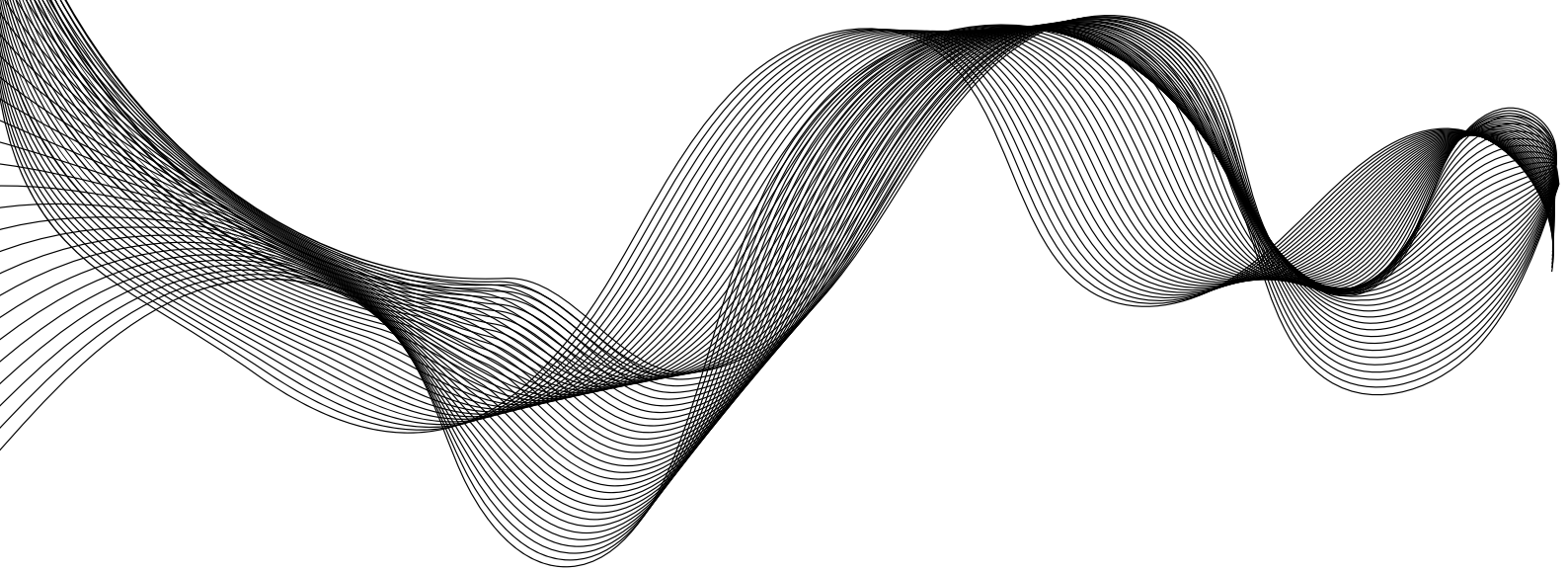
METAMORPHOSIS: SEEING THE INVISIBLE

Since the dawn of time, people have marveled at the caterpillar's visible transformation into a butterfly. Sages, gurus, mystics fantasize about the spiritual meaning of such magical transformation happening in nature silently, everyday. With new technology man can now see in real time the unseen changes that are just as fascinating.

Thanks to modern technology, we can now watch this wonder inside the comfort of our own homes—on high-definition TV. Programs about nature show the best bits in super-slow motion. And it gets even better with the aid of modern DNA analysis and MRIs. We've begun to unravel the secret wonders that make metamorphosis possible. In just a few days, each of the pieces of the former life are carefully torn apart and rearranged.

It's always mind-blowing to look deeper into God's workmanship at the nano-scale. Every step underscores the wisdom and power of THE LIVING UNIVERSE OR NATURE - OUR CREATOR. Such a great foundation of hope to see our possible final transformation from being earthly into something divine without the fearful interference of the mythical gods of religion.

The great thinker and writer Henry Thoreau once wrote, "The cricket, the gurgling stream, the rushing wind amid the trees, all speak to me soberly yet encouragingly of the steady onward progress of the universe."



FOURTEEN: LIFE AFTER DEATH, A METAMORPHOSIS

When referring to the afterlife, the usual words used are resurrection and reincarnation. However, a practical and scientific approach somehow requires the use of a more inclusive word to describe the process of change that happens from one life form to another -- metamorphosis.

What is resurrection?

It is the rising from the dead of a human being who still retains his own personhood, or individuality, though the body may or may not be changed. This is the popular Christian belief.

What is reincarnation?

Reincarnation in Hinduism, also known as the transmigration of souls, refers to the belief that the atman, the real or core self, lives on after death and takes on a new body. Thus, a single soul will live a succession of existences in different forms but is itself eternal.

What is metamorphosis?

It is a biological process by which an animal physically develops including birth transformation or hatching, involving a conspicuous and relatively abrupt change in the animal's body structure through cell growth and differentiation.

Some insects, jellyfish, fish, amphibians, mollusks, crustaceans, cnidarians, echinoderms, and tunicates undergo metamorphosis, which is often accompanied by a change of nutrition source or behavior.

LET US ESTABLISH SOME PERSPECTIVES

"By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."
(Genesis 3:19)

Largely overlooked in the discussion about eternal life, this verse in Genesis summed up in such straightforward detail the cycle of human life, that is, from death to life to death...and back to life.

Adam (humans) are from dust. In our basic non-scientific understanding, dust is a lifeless thing. That is where humans all came from. God created dust, and from dust Adam was created and all subsequent humans evolved from dust.

To be more precise, all humans that came after Adam and Eve were just sperm and egg, dust that were formed in the human bodies and became the beginning of human life.

Genesis 2:7 "Then the Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being (soul)."

Nowhere in the Bible can we find a verse that tells us that God created the human soul or spirit. Such words were just created to develop and support the theologies invented by men. God did not make a body and put a soul into it; rather he formed man's body from the dust, then, by breathing divine breath into it, he made the body of dust live. The dust did not embody a soul, but when it was given the breath of life, it became a soul. Together, the dust and the breath of life became the soul. This is contrary to the popular understanding that the soul exists separately from the body.

NOW, LET US LOOK AT THE DUST SCIENTIFICALLY.

- They are atoms of elements found everywhere on earth.
- All atoms have protons, electrons, etc., which are negatively and positively charged. They have power. They have energy. They have life.

- Microscopic atoms when joined with other atoms becomes visible dust or larger things and become usable to humans.
- These dust can become any of the physical things we see in nature - plants, water, minerals, etc.
- Being composed of atoms, nature in all its forms, have life.

THE NATURAL CYCLE

Water that evaporates carry with it nutrients and minerals (dust) that are then absorbed by plants and eaten by various organisms, animals and humans. These nutrients and minerals become part of the life forms that ingested them...until they are released again to the atmosphere/environment in the cycle of life - from dust to dust.

THE ENERGY CYCLE

Energy is the life that is embedded in every atom of dust. In thermodynamics, it is that which can not be created nor destroyed, though it can change form. In my earlier messages, I have posited that if there is anything that can be the answer to our search for God, energy would be the answer. In the universe, the attributes of God which are omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient and eternal are likewise the attributes of energy, which could make them one and the same. God is energy; energy is God.

Plant and animal life on earth gets their energy from the sun. We get energy from the foods we eat. Our bodies all come from the foods we eat, water we drink, air we breath. When we expire (die), the atoms that compose our bodies just dissipates back into the environment -- from dust to dust. But life does not end here. Following the cycle of life, our bodily compositions that dissipated back into the atmosphere can eventually join another life form...and live again...and again.

REINCARNATION

Being from a Christian background, there is not much I can say about reincarnation. Allow me to resort to quoting descriptions from those that have much to say.

What exactly is reincarnation? It simply means that we leave one life and go into another; it is all for the sole purpose of soul development and spiritual growth. The soul may take the form of human, animal, or plant depending on the moral quality of the previous life's actions. This doctrine is a central tenet of the Indian and Greek religions. However, reincarnation implies that the person remains essentially the same, while occupying a new body. Reincarnation is also known by other terms like “rebirth,” “metempsychosis” (Greek word), “transmigration” (English equivalent of metempsychosis), “disambiguation,” “palingenesis” and so on.[1,2]

In Hinduism, Reincarnation is the religious or philosophical belief that the soul or spirit, after biological death, begins a new life in a new body that may be human, animal or spiritual depending on the moral quality of the previous life's actions.

The Bhagavad Gita states: “Never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all these kings; nor in the future shall any of us cease to be. As the embodied soul continuously passes, in this body, from childhood to youth to old age, the soul similarly passes into another body at death. A sober person is not bewildered by such a change;” and “Worn-out garments are shed by the body; Worn-out bodies are shed by the dweller within the body. New bodies are donned by the dweller, like garments.”

JAINISM

Jainism is historically connected with the Sramana tradition with which the earliest mentions of reincarnation are associated. In Jainism, the soul and matter are considered eternal, uncreated and perpetual. There is a constant interplay between the two, resulting in bewildering cosmic manifestations in material, psychic and emotional spheres around us. This led to the theories of transmigration and rebirth. Changes but not total annihilation of spirit and matter is the basic postulate of Jain philosophy. The life as we know now, after death therefore moves on to another form of life based on the merits and demerits it

accumulated in its current life. The path to becoming a supreme soul is to practice non-violence and be truthful.

BUDDHISM

BUDDHISTS believe that when someone dies, they will be reborn again as something else. What they are reborn as depends on their actions in their previous life (karma). The cycle of rebirth is called samsara. and it is an ongoing cycle of life, death and rebirth.

New Religious Movements

A new religious movement (NRM) (earlier known as 'cult') is a religious community or ethical, spiritual, or philosophical group of modern and recent origin, which has a peripheral place within the dominant religious culture. NRMs may be novel in origin or they may be part of a wider religion, such as Christianity, Hinduism, or Buddhism, in which case they will be distinct from pre-existing denominations. There are several such movements including Theosophical Society, Eckankar, Scientology, Meher Baba, Sai Baba, Brahmakumaris, Osho, and so on.[32–34]

All spiritual schools accept the concept of reincarnation. They admit, with some differences, that the purpose of reincarnation is for the soul to get purified and gain wisdom, so that it comes out of the cycle of birth and death.

According to some believers, memory is nothing but energy in a very subtle form. Being energy, it cannot be destroyed even at death. It is liberated into the cosmos and dissolved. Thus when a person is born, he gets the bits of memories from many people. So he cannot remember his past birth. Nevertheless, in exceptional cases, when a new born gets the entire memory system of another individual, he can easily recall his past birth, though it is not actually his birth. So in true sense, the person is not born again, only his memories are expressed in another individual.

There are now research on this topic in many places around the world yielding interesting results where science and spirituality are coming together.

Excerpts from:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3705678/#:~:text=Reincarnation%20is%20the%20religious%20or,of%20the%20previous%20life's%20actions>

PAUL WORD'S ABOUT BIBLICAL RESURRECTION

1 Cor 15:35-41 -- But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body as he has

determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body. Not all flesh is the same: People have one kind of flesh, animals have another, birds another and fish another. There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies; but the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one kind, and the splendor of the earthly bodies is another. The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendor.

I will give here just short comments.

- Even Paul does not know what the resurrection bodies will be, composed of, or look like. It could not be anything like we already know in the flesh.
- Those hoping for a grand reunion of families and friends will possibly be frustrated. There are no indications that we shall retain our memory, our personality, and the likeness of our physical image in the afterlife. Outside of the "resurrected" myth of Jesus, there is not a single hint of what human afterlife-form will be.
- Like it or not, Paul's description of the resurrection is more in line with deism than Christian expectations. One thing clear is that Paul does not have the language deism now uses.

ETERNAL LIFE IN DEISM

Like any other philosophy or religion, deism is not defined by a single belief. There are Christian deists, Muslim deists, Buddhist deists, secular deists, etc. Compared to other beliefs, deism is still very much in its infancy and individual deists are free to navigate different philosophies and beliefs. I can only offer my personal belief when it comes to the afterlife.

We are all energy, existing in different forms in the cycle of life but united in the fullness of the Divine Energy (God) that created and gave us life. We are united not in religion, creed, race, etc, but in the fullness of the essence of the Divine Creator/Energy. We are energy continually transforming in different life forms; ever changing but never destroyed.

Even in the simple process of the evolution of the human body from infancy to maturity and finally in death exhibits the process of metamorphosis. A biochemist or doctor would tell us that the individual cells in our body have a limited life span - from days to weeks, and a few years. Using sophisticated Carbon-14 dating methods, Dr. Frisen and his team of stem cells researchers in the Karolinska Institute, Stockholm, Sweden, found that the average age of cells in an adult body would be between 7 and 10 years. Considering this sober evidence, we can understand that as we age, our bodily cells are replaced (metamorphosed) regularly. Hence, we have a constantly changing body. However, our consciousness, of who we are, remains unchanging. Our identification of ourselves, “the I Consciousness”

factor remains constant and unchanging. Even though we may develop changes in our likes and dislikes and thinking over the years, we always know who we are in the sense of personal continuity or personal “beingness.” Similarly, “I” - our consciousness is unchanging or immortal, and travels through many changing bodies in time. This is the rational and scientific explanation of reincarnation and resurrection. Seeing that it is a process, the word that best describes it is metamorphosis.

THE DEIST PERSPECTIVE: METAMORPHOSIS

The most beautiful parts of the creation to our eyes are the winged insects, and they are not so originally. They acquire that form and that inimitable brilliancy by progressive changes. The slow and creeping caterpillar-worm of today passes in a few days to a torpid figure and a state resembling death; and in the next change comes forth in all the miniature magnificence of life, a splendid butterfly. No resemblance of the former creature remains; everything is changed; all his powers are new, and life is to him another thing.

The belief of a future state is a rational belief, founded upon facts visible in the creation; for it is not more difficult to believe that we shall exist hereafter in a better state and form than at present, than that a worm should become a butterfly, and quit the dunghill for the atmosphere, if we did not know it as a fact.

(Paul's foolishness) *But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?" How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies.)*

Here is Paul's error; "The grain that dies in the ground never lives again, nor can vegetate. It is only the living grains that produce the next crop."

IT IS SUCCESSION, NOT RESURRECTION

Thomas Paine

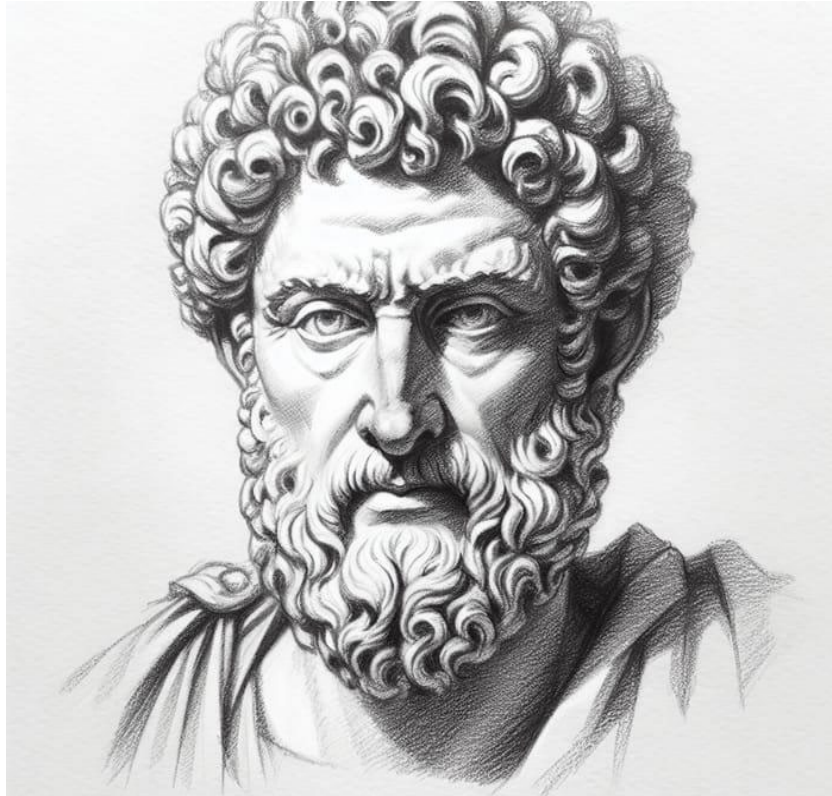
The Age of Reason

Allow me a little modification:
ENERGY NEVER DIES; IT METAMORPHOSES IN
SUCCESSION OF LIFE FORMS IN ETERNITY.

Here is one deists take on the afterlife:

"Given that I am a deist, and I turn to both science and philosophy, I'd like to think that my energy gets to explore the cosmos for an eternity, as an afterlife. Our bodies are full of energy; thermal, mechanical, electrical, and chemical. Per the laws of physics, energy can't be destroyed, only converted from one form to another. It would be awesome for those forms to combine into some type of cosmic energy, and I get to race across the universe!"

AWESOME!



Marcus Aurelius

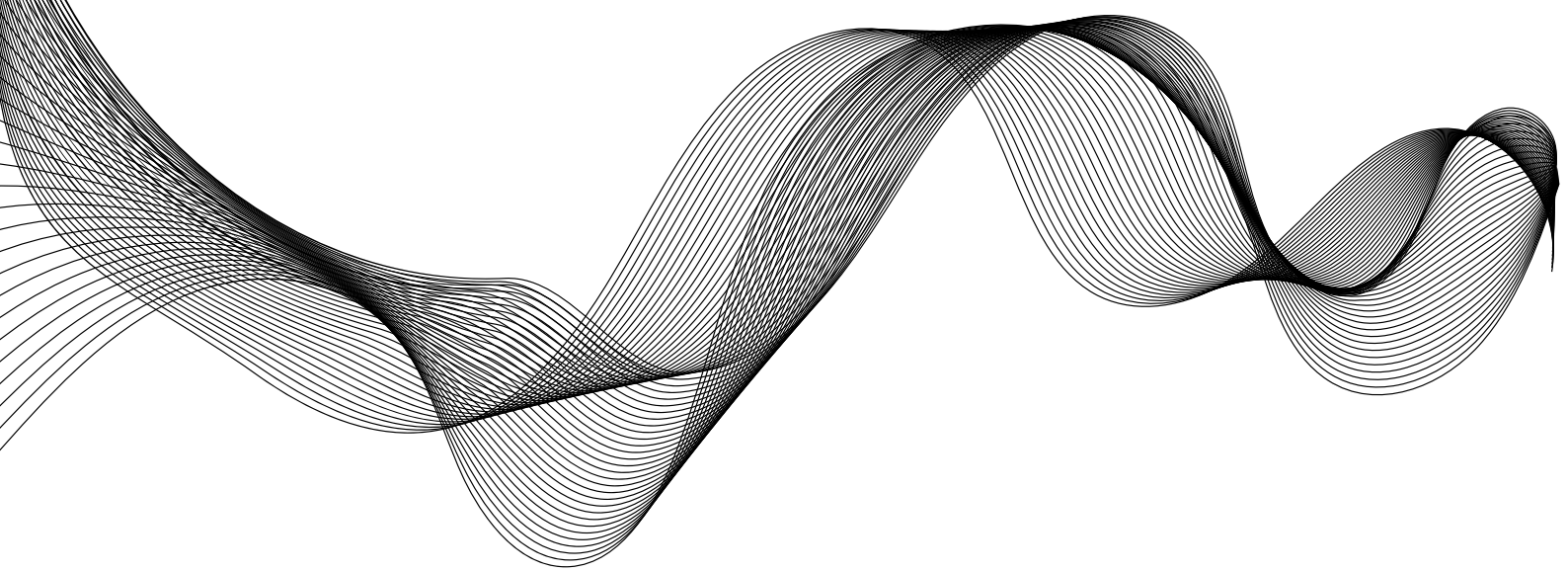
"Everything harmonizes with me, which is harmonious to thee, O Universe. Nothing for me is too early nor too late, if it be in due time for thee. Everything is fruit to me which thy seasons bring, O Nature: from thee are all things, in thee are all things, to thee all things return." (Meditations, Book IV, 23)

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus
(April 26, 121 – March 17, 180)

... was Roman emperor from 161 to 180 and a Stoic philosopher. He was the last of the rulers later known as the Five Good Emperors and the last emperor of the Pax Romana, an age of relative peace, calm, and stability for the Roman Empire lasting from 27 BC to 180 AD. *Meditations* is a series of personal writings by Marcus Aurelius, recording his private notes to himself and ideas on Stoic philosophy.

Marcus Aurelius lived almost two thousand years before the philosophy of Deism came to be, but his ideas in *Meditations* significantly influenced Enlightenment thinkers who developed deistic philosophy. His reflections on a rational, orderly universe governed by natural laws, the value of moral self-discipline, and his detachment from superstition align closely with deistic principles. Aurelius emphasized living in harmony with nature and using reason as a guide, which mirrored the deistic emphasis on a Creator who set the world in motion to operate by rational principles rather than intervening constantly. These Stoic ideas of moral autonomy and universal order resonated with philosophers like Voltaire and Thomas Paine, helping shape the foundation of deism.

> DEISM = STOICISM REBORN <



FIFTEEN: THE PATH AHEAD

"Deism, then, teaches us, without the possibility of being deceived, all that is necessary or proper to be known. The creation is the Bible of the Deist. He there reads, in the handwriting of the Creator himself, the certainty of his existence and the immutability of his power, and all other Bibles and Testaments are to him forgeries. The probability that we may be called to account hereafter will, to a reflecting mind, have the influence of belief; for it is not our belief or disbelief that can make or unmake the fact. As this is the state we are in, and which it is proper we should be in, as free agents, it is the fool only, and not the philosopher, or even the prudent man, that would live as if there were no God. The only religion that has not been invented, and that has in every evidence of divine originality, is pure and simple Deism. It must have been the first, and will probably be the last, that man believes. But pure and simple Deism does not answer the purpose of despotic governments. They cannot lay hold of religion as an engine, but by mixing it with human inventions, and making their own authority a part; neither does it answer the avarice of priests, but by incorporating themselves and their functions with it, and becoming, like the government, a party in the system. It is this that

forms the otherwise mysterious connection of church and state; the church humane, and the state tyrannic.

The study of theology, as it stands in Christian churches, is the study of nothing; it is founded on nothing; it rests on no principles; it proceeds by no authorities; it has no data; it can demonstrate nothing; and it admits of no conclusion. Not anything can be studied as a science, without our being in possession of the principles upon which it is founded; and as this is not the case with Christian theology, it is therefore the study of nothing.

Were man impressed as fully and as strongly as he ought to be with the belief of a God, his moral life would be regulated by the force of that belief; he would stand in awe of God and of himself, and would not do the thing that could not be concealed from either. To give this belief the full opportunity of force, it is necessary that it acts alone. This is Deism."

Thomas Paine, *The Age of Reason*

Deist societies or organizations with deist philosophies like the Quakers and the Freemasons have been recognized in the past but did not organize churches. To me, they are good examples of the path for the future of Deism.

The Quakers, or the Society of Friends, is a group that rejects outward rites and an ordained ministry, and that has a long tradition of actively working for peace

and opposing war. Quakerism is a way of life, rather than a set of beliefs. It has roots in Christianity and many Quakers find the life and teachings of the man Jesus inspirational.

Quakers have been a significant part of the movements for the abolition of slavery, and to promote equal rights for women, and peace. They have also promoted education and the humane treatment of prisoners and the mentally ill, through the founding or reforming of various institutions.

William Penn (1644-1718) was an English real estate entrepreneur, philosopher, and religious reformer who played a significant role in the founding of The State of Pennsylvania, a colony in North America that became a haven for religious freedom and a model of democratic governance. Penn was born into an Anglican family but later converted to Quakerism. William Penn University, founded by Quakers, was named in his honor.

Other notable Quakers include two American Presidents, Richard Nixon and Herbert Hoover. Dolley Madison - First Lady, wife of President James Madison, Nathaniel Greene - General in the American Revolution, Daniel Boone - Frontiersman and early organizer of the State of Kentucky and Cadbury, Fry and Rowntree - Chocolate makers

Contrary to their popular cryptic image, Freemasonry, on the other hand, is just another self-improvement,

volunteer association that teaches moral, intellectual, and spiritual lessons.

While Freemasonry is not itself a religion, all its members believe in a Supreme Being, or "Grand Architect of the Universe." Members come from many faiths but the Catholic Church in particular bars any crossover and has long demonized the organization.

Freemasons belong to the oldest fraternal organization in the world, a group begun during the Middle Ages in Europe as a guild of skilled builders. With the decline of cathedral building, the focus of the society shifted. Today, "Freemasons are a social and philanthropic organization meant to make its members lead more virtuous and socially oriented lives." Grounded in the Enlightenment, the organization still conveys the core values of religious tolerance, thirst for knowledge, and sociability." Quakerism and Freemasonry seem to have provided the humanitarian template that I would like to follow.

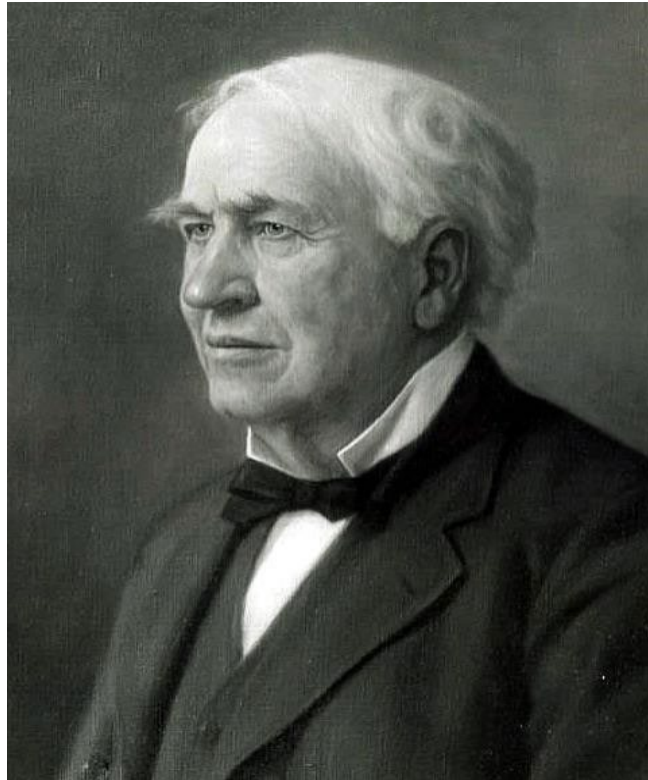
As of this writing, deism possessed no unified theological statement, creed, or doctrine, and it may just be what will keep it pure. Since 2018 when I started to write my spiritual journey, I did not anticipate that such will lead me into deism. When people asked me about my theology I could not give a definite answer because deism was not yet part of my vocabulary. It was actually a friend residing in Australia who pointed out that my developing belief is deism.

We hold our heroes dear for various reasons. Before becoming a deist, I was fascinated by Andres Bonifacio's legendary rise from humble beginnings to become the founder and head of the Katipunan, the Filipino people's revolutionary organization. How the movement was built in secrecy, the organizational structure formed, raising the logistics, etc. Bonifacio's organizational genius was brilliant by any standard. Jose Rizal's pacifist approach towards independence did not appeal to me then. When I came across the philosophy of Deism, it struck a deep chord in me. It clearly appealed to me as the better way as it incorporates and balances reason, science, and spirituality in one composite philosophy.

As I can not remain a desktop advocate of deism, and because the small number of people who followed my journey are encouraging me to do more than just write, I have decided to advance my advocacy in the areas of education, information dissemination, and the possible incorporation of a civil society organization. The publication of this book is just the first step.

The future will decide what will come out of this decision.

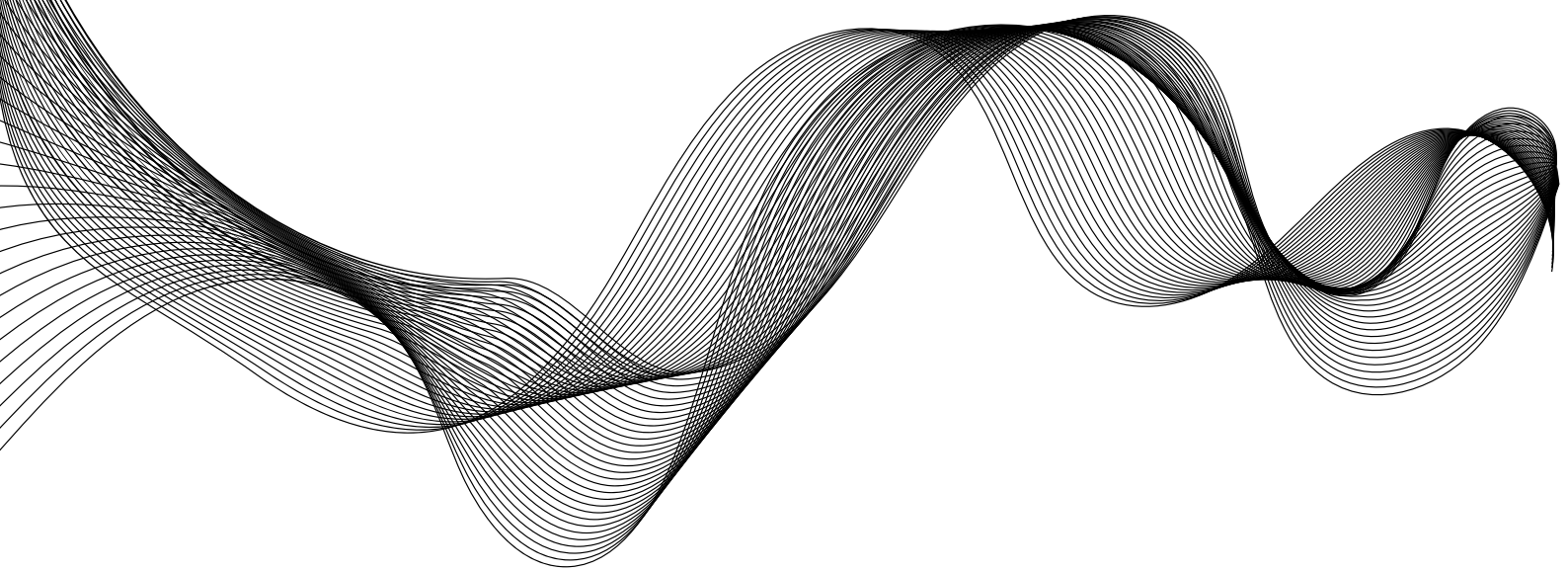
> IF YOU BELIEVE IN GOD BUT NOT IN RELIGION,
YOU ARE A DEIST <



Thomas Alva Edison

Thomas Edison didn't explicitly contribute to deism as a formal movement, but his beliefs and statements reflect a deistic outlook. Edison valued science, reason, and observation over religious dogma, aligning with deism's emphasis on a rational understanding of the universe. He viewed the concept of "God" as an impersonal force or intelligence, akin to nature's laws, rather than as a deity involved in human affairs.

Edison's statements and ideas about religion contributed indirectly to the broader conversation on deism by challenging conventional religious views and encouraging people to think about spirituality and the universe through a lens of scientific inquiry. His approach exemplified the deistic idea of finding "God" in nature and the natural laws governing it, which continues to inspire those who seek a non-religious yet spiritually meaningful understanding of existence.



CONCLUSION

Is Deism a Cult?

It's impossible for Deism to be a cult because Deism teaches self-reliance and encourages people to constantly use their reason. Deism teaches one to

"question authority" no matter what the cost. Unlike the revealed religions, Deism makes no unreasonable claims of power and authority, and to miracles and revelations. Likewise, it makes no demands from its adherents to pay tithes and offerings, make sacrifices or make pilgrimages.

Most of all, it does not threaten anyone with everlasting conscious punishment in an eternal fire. The revealed religions encourage people to give up, or at least to suspend, their God-given reason and common sense. They like to call it faith, believing the unknown and imaginary, and proud of it.

For example, how logical is it to believe that Moses parted the Red Sea, or that Jesus walked on water, or that Mohammed received the Koran from an angel? Suspending your reason enough to believe these tales only sets a precedent that leads to believing a Jim Jones, David Koresh or Apollo Quiboloy. We were born and brought in a world where there are many different religions. People identify with one or

other religion, or to a sect within those different religions even though many have but little knowledge of what they regard as 'their' religion and display even less practical commitment to it.

Given the pervasiveness and deep-rootedness of religion in different cultures and societies into which one is born, it was perhaps but natural that no one could escape being conditioned by religion from childhood onwards, even though most parents were not very religious in the conventional sense of the term. And then, finally, decades later, some of us exited religion altogether, concluding that religion is a human construct. This was accompanied by the realization that one does not have to be religious, to believe in or identify with one or the other religion, in order to have a connection with the Creator of the universe, whose existence is clearly observable from the nature and immensity of the creation.

Right through my long religious phase - from age 15-50 - there was a mix of many factors that caused me to develop an interest in a religion. For much of this journey, I was consumed by a desire to be connected with the Creator of the universe. I intuitively believed that the Creator God definitely existed. During my long religious phase, the belief in a "personal god" seemed inseparably linked with religion, which we had been somehow led to accept unquestioningly, that there was one—and only one—supposedly 'correct' way to be connected with God, to be in 'His' good books, to win 'His' favour and to

merit 'His' grace, in this world and the world that comes. This supposed 'only one' way to God was one of the many 'world' religions which millions of people followed. NOW -- in locating the supposed 'only true' religion and then believing and practicing it -- is really a big problem

Like many others, I had studied from one belief system to another in the hope of arriving at this supposedly 'one true' religion, spending many years (decades) in the process. But when I came to the very simple realization that there was no logical reason why God had to be found necessarily only in one religion, and why one needed to believe in some religion or the other and practice it in order to be in communion with God, it facilitated my final exit from religion altogether. I now understand that I could connect with God directly, in the manner that resonated best with me, without having this connection being mediated by religion in any way. In other words, I REALIZED I HAVE BEEN A DEIST ALL ALONG.

Looking back, I find it remarkable that THE DEIST OPTION HAD ALWAYS BEEN THERE -- the realization that one can relate with the Creator God without having to believe in, or identify with, and practice one or any other religion.

One simple reason why many haven't considered deism is that almost no one talked about it. The power of institutionalized religion is so pervasive that to be outside of it is to be considered an outcast. In other words, I had never met a "knowledgeable" deist in all those years. The second simple reason is that DEISM or

being a DEIST are very new words -- words which are almost non-existent -- perhaps until the 1800's.

But now, mercifully, I know better. I now know that one can connect with the Creator directly, without believing in and identifying with any religion. Coming to know this has been one of the biggest discoveries, as well as liberating experiences, of my life. Truly, arriving at deism has been such a life-changing deliverance from the terrors of morally corrupt religion(s).

About the Author:

Avelino Padilla is a pastor-teacher who ministered in a variety of demanding roles. His journey from Christianity into deism was rooted in his desire for a better understanding of the Christian faith, which he progressively found to be full of fables, myths, errors, and contradictions. The process took him on a road of discovery as he immersed himself in the study of different religious philosophies, from the Abrahamic religions to the perplexing esoteric beliefs of the East. Arriving at the very simple realization that there was no logical reason why God had to be found necessarily in only one religion in order to be in communion with the Divine, it facilitated his final exit from religion altogether. As any deist would say, "I now understand that I could connect with God directly, in the manner that resonated best with me, without having this connection being mediated by religion in any way."

In other words, he found the beauty of Deism.

