
BULLETIN

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OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT

During 1804, Paine sent at least 16 articles, on religious topics, to *The Prospect*, a New York monthly edited by Elihu Palmer. The following piece is one of those short articles. Paine and Palmer founded the Theistic Society in that year. Palmer wrote that Paine was "probably the most useful man that ever existed on the face of the earth". Palmer died suddenly in 1804 and Paine, in his characteristic generous, humanitarian way, gave assistance to the widow from his dwindling funds.

ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON says: "The difference between the style of the Old and New Testament is so remarkable, that one of the greatest sects in the primitive times, did, upon this very ground, found their heresy of two Gods, the one evil, fierce and cruel, whom they called the God of the Old Testament; the other good, kind and merciful, whom they called the God of the New Testament; so great a difference is there between the representations that are given of God in the books of the Jewish and Christian religion, as to give, at least, some color and pretense to an imagination of two Gods." Thus far Tillotson.

But the case was that as the Church had picked out several passages from the Old Testament, which she most absurdly and falsely calls prophecies of Jesus Christ (whereas there is no prophecy of any such person, as anyone may see by examining the passages and the cases to which they apply), she was under the necessity of keeping up the credit of the Old Testament, because if that fell the other would soon follow, and the Christian system of faith would soon be at an end.

As a book of morals, there are several parts of the New Testament that are good; but they are no other than what had been preached in the Eastern world several hundred years before Christ was born. Confucius, the Chinese philosopher, who lived five hundred years before the time of Christ, says, *Acknowledge thy benefits by the return of benefits, but never revenge injuries.*

The clergy in Popish countries were cunning enough to know that if the Old Testament was made public, the fallacy of the New, with respect to Christ, would be detected, and they prohibited the use of it, and always took it away wherever they found it.

The Deists, on the contrary, always encouraged the reading it, that people might see and judge for themselves, that a book so full of contradictions and wickedness could not be the Word of God, and that we dishonor God by ascribing it to Him. A TRUE DEIST.

--selection by Martha Spiegelman
