

#849 The Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg – The Muhlenbergs from Trappe, part 6, These are the Times that Try Men’s Souls

We have studied Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, and *These are the times that try men’s souls* in the series **Thomas Paine and God Trying Men’s Souls**, in Unsealings [#452–#465](#). Thomas Paine’s impact on the founder of the Lutheran Church in America, Henry Muhlenberg, is told in the excerpts (shown further *below*) from the book *The Muhlenbergs in Pennsylvania*.

Review: Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* was published on January 10, 1776, to confirm its considerable role in the offering of the kingdom of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania – the United States – in the fulfillment of Revelation 3:10 [January 10 = 1:10 + 2 months = 3:10]. [Reference Unsealing [#465](#).]

Revelation 3:7, 10 (KJV) And to the angel of the CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; 10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION, which shall come upon all the world, TO TRY THEM that dwell upon the earth.



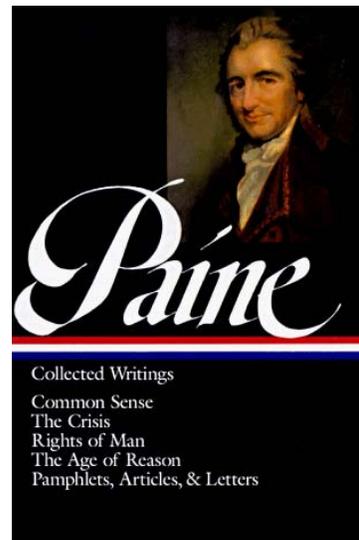
New Material: Here is another excerpt from the book *The Muhlenbergs of Pennsylvania*, by Paul A. W. Wallace, p. 109, 122-3, © 1950, published by the University of Pennsylvania Press:



Henry Muhlenberg

... early in 1776 [Henry Melchior Muhlenberg] came to see that there was more in the Revolution than God’s punishment for sin. There was a principle of growth in all this fermentation. Tom Paine helped him to see it. Henry Melchior [Muhlenberg] read *Common Sense* in a German translation, and was so impressed with it that he sent a copy to Emanuel Schultze [the son-in-law of Henry Muhlenberg and a pastor in Philadelphia, born January

25, 1740, died March 9, 1809] . . . Tom Paine was no metaphysician. He dealt with principles, it is true, but actively rather than profoundly he put them to work. He transformed ideas into slogans, into appeals for



action. And he equated them with common sense. A great propagandist, he gave, in lightning flashes, glimpses of vast horizons, and at the same time made clear as day to his readers the first step forward they must take.

[Quoting from *Common Sense*.] The cause of America is, in great measure, the cause of all mankind . . . the design and end of government, viz., freedom and security . . . O ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose not only the tyranny but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the old world is overrun with oppression. Freedom hath been hunted around the globe. Asia and Africa have long expelled her. Europe regards her like a stranger, and England hath given her warning to depart. Receive the fugitive, and prepare in time an asylum for mankind.

Henry Melchior Muhlenberg was overwhelmed. This wild, free country – could it be that its very freedom, despite the froth on the surface, was a good thing in itself, or at least held promise of good for the future?

He sent a copy of the pamphlet to his favorite son-in-law [referring to Emanuel Schultze], and with it he sent a letter. Considering the importance of what he wrote in it, we should remember that he spoke more freely to Emanuel Schultze than to other members of the family. He wrote to him without reservation. What he said on this occasion puts his convictions beyond dispute:

“The young people are right in fighting for their God-given native liberty.”

He was, of course, speaking of others, of the young, native product. For himself, there was still the intolerable anguish of a divided loyalty: loyalty to his adopted country and the young people in it who were fighting for the rights of mankind; and loyalty to the King to whom he had given his oath of allegiance.



Key Understanding: *The letter to Philadelphia*. Quite amazingly, the contents of the letter itself from the founder of the Lutheran Church in America, Henry Muhlenberg, to his son-in-law pastor of a church in Philadelphia, Emanuel Schultze – regarding the virtues of Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense*, which contains the words *These are the times that try men’s souls* – constitute an exact fulfillment of Revelation 3:10, in the letter to the Church in Philadelphia, that the Lord would send an hour of temptation “*to try them that dwell upon the earth.*” The Lord used Henry Muhlenberg’s letter to a pastor of a church in Philadelphia to fulfill in part the letter to the Church in Philadelphia.

Revelation 3:7, 10 (KJV) And to the angel of the CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; 10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION, which shall come upon all the world, TO TRY THEM that dwell upon the earth.

Thomas Paine's words *These are the times that try men's souls*, while serving as an announcement by Thomas Paine that the choice (offered by an 'Age of Reason' deistic God) between representative Democracy or Tyranny was a 'good vs. evil' testing and trying of men's souls – for it was a test of men's mettle, courage, wisdom, and heart because of the risk attached to that choice – had the *ordained irony* of serving as an announcement by the Lord that the Revolutionary War event was actually testing men's souls over the choice between serving the representative Democracy of the earthly Scarlet Beast Kingdom of America, or serving the Heavenly Kingdom of God. [Reference Unsealing [#456](#).]

Because of the faulty church/state foundation of the Lutheran gospel, Henry Muhlenberg, the founder of the Lutheran Church in America, succumbed to the temptation offering of a kingdom of this world – the United States of America – and its glory (Matthew 4:8-11).

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