

THE
CHALDÆAN
ORACLES

AS SET DOWN BY
JULIANUS



HEPTANGLE BOOKS
GILLETTE & NEW JERSEY
MCMLXXXIX



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CHALDÆAN
ORACLES

AS SET DOWN BY
JULIANUS

TRANSLATED INTO THE LATIN BY
FRANCESCO PATRIZZI

AND TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY
THOMAS STANLEY



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MCM LXXXIX



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THE ORACLES

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PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD



ZOROASTER; NOTWITHSTANDING PREVIOUS published editions of this work, as well as the tradition handed down from late Hellenism through the Middle Ages; most assuredly did not compose these Oracles. And, while it will not be denied that there may be elements contained in the Oracles which might tend to suggest a link with Iranian dualism; there is little evidence to suggest composition before the present era, and much less to suggest composition by the legendary figure of Zoroaster. Present scholarship all but conclusively attributes the authorship of the *Chaldæan Oracles* to Julianus, the theurgist, living during the reign of Marcus Aurelius.* Whether originally one continuous poem or a collection of poems; whether delivered through the entranced lips of Julianus himself, or through the entranced lips of some other medium or mediums, and subsequently put to verse by Julianus; these *Oracles* were considered to be a divine revelation from the Gods, and as such perhaps the last Sacred Book of pagan antiquity. What is known of the methods of the official oracles of antiquity, coupled with the often rather confused state of the fragments of the *Chaldæan Oracles*; suggests that the conjecture, that the *Oracles* were delivered through the agency of a mediumistic trance, is far from unreasonable.† The authority that these *Oracles* possessed for many, and for many philosophers, may perhaps

* Dodds, E. R., "New Light on the 'Chaldæan Oracles,'" *Harvard Theological Review*, LIV, 1961, p. 263.

† ——— "Theurgy and its Relation to Neoplatonism," *Journal of Roman Studies*, xxxvii, p. 56.

be illustrated by Proclus, who is quoted by his biographer Marinus as having said: "If I had in my power, out of all the ancient books I would suffer to be current only the *Oracles* and the *Timæus*,"* and in the *Commentary on the Timæus* Julianus is cited as the theurgist "whom it is unlawful to disbelieve."† Unfortunately, of this Sacred Book we possess only fragments.

¶ Of Julianus little is known; he was the son of a Chaldaean philosopher of the same name; he is reputed to have saved the Roman Army in the campaign against the Quadi in AD 173, by causing a thunderstorm; and in competition with Apollonius and Apuleius, he is reputed to have saved the City of Rome from a plague by the mere utterance of a command.‡ He is the first man to be given the title or designation of theurgist, and other than his status as a magician, his major accomplishment is that it is from his hand that the *Chaldaean Oracles* were given to the world: saved from obscurity by Porphyry and elevated to sacred authority by Iamblichus and Proclus. And, if Julianus is the first theurgist—theurgy: literally 'god-working'—the *Chaldaean Oracles* comprise the first work of theurgy.

¶ What is theurgy? What indeed is 'god-working' if not some form of magic? Augustine sees the designation as an attempt to differentiate between a supposedly higher and laudable magic, *i. e.*, purification and salvation, from the baser and condemned magic, *i. e.*, goetia or necromancy.§

* Marinus, *Life of Proclus*, Grand Rapids, 1986: Phanes, p. 55.

† Dodds, E. R., *Proclus' Elements of Theology*, Oxford, 1964, p. xxi.

‡ Dodds, *op. cit.*, JRS., p. 56f.

§ *City of God*, X, 9.

If that were the whole of the matter, it would be unlikely that theurgy could ever have had the influence that it did. The influence of theurgy lies more in its attempt to give the phenomena of magic some philosophical coherence, than in the distinction between licit and illicit magic.

¶ From its inception with Plotinus, a central theme in Neoplatonism is that of personal salvation through a mystical union with the One or God. For Plotinus, at least, that union was effected through the preparation of the toil of intellect, not theurgy. Plotinus would probably have condemned the Chaldæan philosophers along with the collection of mystagogos he calls Gnostics.* Those who followed in his wake, however, saw in the *Oracles* and theurgy an easier path to salvation than the one offered by Plotinus, and cloaked with the mantle of some philosophical coherence, they seized it and made it a sacred authority.

¶ While the *Chaldæan Oracles* are the first work of theurgy, they are not, however, a text-book of theurgy; there is not one ritual contained among the fragments, as we now possess them. Whatever rituals the Chaldæan Rites included, we have some glimpses from preserved bits of tradition and the *Oracles* themselves that theurgists were very accomplished magicians, adept at necromancy as well as producing luminous apparitions of the Gods. By means of the Chaldæan Rites Julianus was introduced to the ghost of Plato by his father, possessed a ritual which produced visible apparitions of the God Chronos, as well as one to cause men's souls to leave and re-enter

* *Enneads*, IJ, 9, [33].

the body;* Proclus was granted visible and luminous apparitions of Hecate, †onetime Goddess of sorcery, now in the *Oracles* vaguely associated with the world-soul; theurgists could invoke Iynges ‡ [angels?] and the traditional Gods of astrology, § as well as, the to be avoided, terrestrial demons; * and in addition, by means of these Rites a theurgist could construct oracular statues and talismans. **The rituals themselves were, doubtless, regarded as professional trade secrets, and as such probably did not form a part of the *Oracles*, which were for more general circulation.

[Had we the Chaldæan Rites, or even a complete collection of the *Oracles*, with or without Julianus' commentary, we should be in a much better position to understand the Chaldæan Theology and its influence on later Hellenism and its philosophy, as well as its influence on the then nascent and soon to be official mystery cult: Christianity. Regrettably, what we have is far from complete; we present in this edition, what we have, with full knowledge of its shortcomings. ††

* Dodds, *op. cit.*, JRS., p. 56.

† *Ibidem*, p. 59.

‡ l. 300 and Psellus Commentary [p. 71].

§ *ll.*, 283-290; *ll.*, 291-294, Psellus [p. 71] and Pletho [p. 54].

* Psellus [p. 87]; *ll.*, 298-299, Psellus [p. 78] and Pletho [p. 52].

** Dodds, *op. cit.*, JRS., p. 62ff.

†† [With the publication of the *Greek Magical Papyri in Translation* (edited by Betz, University of Chicago Press, 1986) the Greek-les reader is provided with a collection of rituals dating from the second century BC to the fifth century AD; which, if not the Chaldæan Rites *per se*, offers rites which are in all probability their closest parallels.]

PREFACE

*W. W. Westcott**



THESE ORACLES ARE CONSIDERED TO EMBODY many of the principal features of the Chaldean philosophy. They have come down to us through Greek translations and were held in the greatest esteem throughout antiquity, a sentiment which was shared alike by the early Christian Fathers and the later Platonists. The doctrines contained therein are attributed to Zoroaster, though which particular Zoroaster is not known; historians give notices of as many as six different individuals all bearing that name, which was probably the title of the prince of the Magi, and a generic term. The word Zoroaster is by various authorities differently derived: Kircher furnishes one of the most interesting derivations when he seeks to show that it comes from TzURA, a figure, and TzIUR, to fashion, ASH, fire, and STR, hidden; from these he gets the words Zairaster, fashioning images of hidden fire;—or Tzuraster, the image of secret things. Others derive it from Chaldee and Greek words meaning ‘a contemplator of the Stars.’

¶It is not, of course, pretended that this collection as it stands is other than disjointed and fragmentary, and it is more than probable that the true sense of many passages

* Sapere Aude, Wertcott's pseudonym, used in the edition of 1895.

has been obscured, and even in some cases hopelessly obliterated, by inadequate translation.

[[Where it has been possible to do so, an attempt has been made to elucidate doubtful or ambiguous expressions, either by modifying the existing translation from the Greek, where deemed permissible, or by appending annotations.

[[It has been suggested by some that these Oracles are of Greek invention, but it has already been pointed out by Stanley that Picus de Mirandula assured Ficinus that *he* had the Chaldee Original in his possession, "in which those things which are faulty and defective in the Greek are read perfect and entire," and Ficinus indeed stated that he found this MS. upon the death of Mirandula. In addition to this, it should be noted that here and there in the original Greek version, words occur which are not of Greek extraction at all, but are Hellenised Chaldee.

[[Berosus is said to be the first who introduced the writings of the Chaldæans concerning Astronomy and Philosophy among the Greeks,* and it is certain that the traditions of Chaldæa very largely influenced Greek thought. Taylor considers that some of these mystical utterances are the sources whence the sublime conceptions of Plato were formed, and large commentaries were written upon them by Porphyry, Iamblichus, Proclus, Pletho and Psellus. That men of such great learning and sagacity should have thought so highly of these Oracles, is a fact which in itself should commend them to our attention.

* Josephus *Contra Apion*, I.

¶ The term 'Oracles' was probably bestowed upon these epigrammatic utterances in order to enforce the idea of their profound and deeply mysterious nature. The Chaldæans, however, had an Oracle, which they venerated as highly as the Greeks did that at Delphi.*

¶ We are indebted to both Psellus and Pletho, for comments at some length upon the Chaldæan Oracles, and the collections adduced by these writers has been considerably enlarged by Franciscus Patrizzi, who made many additions from Proclus, Hermias, Simplicius, Damascius, Synesius, Olympiodorus, Nicephorus and Arnobius; his collection, which comprised some 324 oracles under general heads, was published in Latin in 1593, and constitutes the groundwork of the later classification arrived at by Taylor and Cory.

* Stephanus, *De Urbibus*.

INTRODUCTION

*Percy Bullock**



IT HAS BEEN BELIEVED BY MANY, AND NOT WITHOUT good reason, that these terse and enigmatic utterances enshrine a profound system of mystical philosophy, but that this system demands for its full discernment a refinement of faculty, involving, as it does, a discrete perception of immaterial essences.

¶ It has been asserted that the Chaldæan Magi† preserved their occult learning among their race by continual tradition from Father to Son. Diodorus says: "They learn these things, not after the same fashion as the Greeks: for amongst the Chaldæans, philosophy is delivered by tradition in the family, the Son receiving it from his Father, being exempted from all other employment: and thus having their parents for teachers, they learn all things fully and abundantly, believing more firmly what is communicated to them."‡

¶ The remains then of this oral tradition seems to exist in these Oracles, which should be studied in the light of

* L. O. in 1895 edition.

† This powerful Guild was the guardian of Chaldæan philosophy, which exceeded the bounds of their country, and diffused itself into Persia and Arabia that borders upon it; for which reason the learning of the Chaldæans, Persians and Arabians is comprehended under the general title of Chaldæan.

‡ Diodorus, *Lib. I.*

the Kabalah and of Egyptian Theology. Students are aware that the Kabalah* is susceptible of extraordinary interpretation with the aid of the Tarot, resuming as the latter does, the very roots of Egyptian Theology. Had a similar course been adopted by the commentators in the past, the Chaldæan system expounded in these Oracles would not have been distorted in the way it has been.

¶The foundation upon which the whole structure of the Hebrew Kabalah rests is an exposition of ten deific powers successively emanated by the Illimitable Light, which in their varying dispositions are considered as the key of all things. This divine procession in the form of Three Triads of Powers, synthesized in a tenth, is said to be extended through four worlds, denominated respectively Atziluth, Briah, Yetzirah, and Assiah, a fourfold gradation from the subtle to the gross. This proposition in its metaphysical roots is pantheistic, though, if it may be so stated, mediately theistic; while the ultimate noumenon of all phenomena is the absolute Deity, whose ideation constitutes the objective Universe.

¶Now these observations apply strictly also to the Chaldæan system. The accompanying diagrams sufficiently indicate the harmony and the identity of the Chaldæan philosophy with the Hebrew Kabalah. It will be seen that the First Mind and the *Intellectual Triad* Pater, Potentia, or Matter, and Mens, are allotted to the Intelligible World of Supra-mundane Light: the 'First Mind' represents the archetypal intelligence as an entity in the bosom of the Paternal Depth. This concentrates by reflection

* *Vide* MacGregor Mathers, *Kabalah Denudata*.

into the 'Second Mind' representative of the Divine Power in the Empyræan World which is identified with the second great Triad of divine powers, known as *the Intelligible and at the same time Intellectual Triad*: the Æthereal World comprises the dual third Triad denominated *Intellectual*: while the fourth or Elementay World is governed by Hypezokos, or Flower of Fire, the actual builder of the world.

CHALDÆAN SCHEME OF BEINGS

- I HYPERARCHII—Archangels
- IJ AZONCEI—Unzoned Gods
- IIJ ZONCEI—Planetary Deities

HIGHER DÆMONS: Angels

HUMAN SOULS

LOWER DÆMONS: Elementals
(*Fiery, Airy, Watery & Earthly*)

EVIL DEMONS: Lucifugous
(the Kliphoth)

¶ Chaldæan Theology contemplated three great divisions of supra-mundane things:—the First was *Eternal*, without beginning or end, being the 'Paternal Depth,' the bosom of the Deity. The Second was conceived to be that mode

CHALDÆAN SCHEME

<p style="text-align: center;">WORLD OF SUPRA- MUNDANE LIGHT <i>Intelligibles</i> [known: (intuition)]</p>	}	<p style="text-align: center;">FIRST MIND</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Paternal Depth Intelligible Triad Pater: Potentia: Mens</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">EMPYRÆAN WORLD <i>Intelligible-Intellectuals</i> [known and knowing]</p>	}	<p style="text-align: center;">SECOND MIND</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Iynges Synoches Teletarchæ</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ETHEREAL WORLD <i>Intellectuals</i> [knowing]</p>	}	<p style="text-align: center;">THIRD MIND</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Three Cosmagogi <i>(Intellectual guides inflexible)</i> Three Amilicti <i>(Implacable thunders)</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ELEMENTARY WORLD <i>Demiurgos</i> [artificer, maker]</p>	}	<p style="text-align: center;">MATERIAL UNIVERSE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Hypezokos <i>(Flower of Fire)</i> Effable, Essential & Elemental Orders</p>

The Earth—Matter

KABALISTIC SCHEME

WORLD OF ATZILUTH
GOD

Boundless Illimitable Light
Ain Suph
Ain Suph Aur
A radiant triangle

WORLD OF BRIA
Divine Forces

Kether
(Crown)

Binah (Intelligence) Chokmah (Wisdom)

WORLD OF YEZIRAH
Formation

Geburah Chesed

Hod Tiphereth Netzach

Yesod

WORLD OF ASSIAH
Material Form

Malkuth
Ruled by
ADONAI MELEKH

The Earth—Matter

of being having beginning but no end; the Creative World or Empyræum falls under this head, abounding as it does in productions, but its source remaining superior to these. The third and last order of divine things had a beginning in time and will end, this is the transitory Ethereal World. Seven spheres extended through these three Worlds, *viz.*, one in the Empyræum or verging from it, three in the Ethereal and three in the Elementary Worlds, while the whole physical realm synthesized in the foregoing. These seven spheres are not to be confounded with the Seven material Planets; although the latter are the physical representations of the former, which can only be said to be material in the metaphysical sense of the term. Psellus professed to identify them but his suggestions are inadequate as Stanley pointed out. But Stanley, although disagreeing with Psellus, is nevertheless inconsistent upon this point, for although he explains the four Worlds of the Chaldæans as successively noumenal to the physical realm, he obviously contradicts this in saying that one *corporeal* world is in the Empyræum (Prior to the supramundane Light lay the 'Paternal Depth,' the Absolute Deity, containing all things 'in potentia' and eternally immanent. This is analogous to the Ain Suph Aur of the Kabalah, three words of three letters, expressing three triads of Powers, which are subsequently translated into objectivity, and constitute the great Triadic Law under the direction of the Demiurgus, or artificer of the Universe.

(In considering this schema, it must be remembered that the supramundane Light was regarded as the primal ra-

diation from the Paternal Depth and the archetypal noumenon of the Empyræum, a universal, all-pervading—and, to human comprehension—ultimate essence. The Empyræum again, is somewhat grosser though still highly subtilized Fire and creative source, in its turn the noumenon of the Formative or Ethereal World, as the latter is the noumenon of the Elemental World. Through these graduated media the conceptions of the Paternal Mind are ultimately fulfilled in time and space.

¶ In some respects it is probable that the Oriental mind today is not much altered from what it was thousands of years ago, and much that now appears to us curious and phantastic in Eastern traditions, still finds responsive echo in the hearts and minds of a vast portion of mankind. A large number of thinkers and scientists in modern times have advocated tenets which, while not exactly similar, are parallel to ancient Chaldæan conceptions; this is exemplified in the notion that the operation of natural law in the Universe is controlled or operated by conscious and discriminating power which is co-ordinate with intelligence. It is but one step further to admit that forces are entities, to people the vast spaces of the Universe with the children of phantasy. Thus history repeats itself, and the old and the new alike reflect the multiform truth.

¶ Without entering at length into the metaphysical aspect, it is important to notice the supremacy attributed to the 'Paternal Mind.' The intelligence of the Universe, poetically described as *energising before energy*, establishes on high the primordial types or patterns of things which are to be, and, then inscrutably latent, vests the development of these in the *Rectores Mundorum*, the divine Re-

gents or powers already referred to. As it is said: *mind is with Him, power with them.*

¶The word 'Intelligible' is used in the Platonic sense, to denote a mode of being, power or perception, transcending intellectual comprehension, *i. e.*, wholly distinct from, and superior to, ratiocination. The Chaldæans recognised three modes of perception, *viz.*, the testimony of the various senses, the ordinary processes of intellectual activity, and the intelligible conceptions before referred to. Each of these operations is distinct from the others, and, moreover, conducted in separate matrices, or vehicula. The anatomy of the Soul was, however, carried much farther than this, and, although in its ultimate radix recognised as identical with the divinity, yet in manifested being it was conceived to be highly complex. The Oracles speak of the 'Paths of the Soul,' the tracings of inflexible fire by which its essential parts are associated in integrity; while its various 'summits,' 'fountains,' and 'vehicula,' are all traceable by analogy with universal principles. This latter fact is, indeed, not the least remarkable feature of the Chaldæan system. Like several of the ancient cosmogonies, the principal characteristic of which seems to have been a certain adaptability to introversion, Chaldæan metaphysics synthesize most clearly in the human constitution.

¶In each of the Chaldæan Divine Worlds a trinity of divine powers operated, which synthetically constituted a fourth term. *in every world a Triad shineth, of which the Monad is the ruling principle.* These 'Monads' are the divine Vice-gerents by which the Universe was conceived to be administered. Each of these four Worlds, *viz.*, the Em-

pyræan, Ethereal, Elementary and Material, was presided over by a Supreme Power, itself in direct rapport with 'the Father' and *moved by unspeakable counsels*. These are clearly identical with the Kabalistic conception of the presidential heads of the four letters composing the Deity name in so many different languages. A parallel tenet is conveyed in the Oracle which runs: *There is a venerable Name projected through the worlds with sleepless revolution*. The Kabalah again supplies the key to this utterance, by regarding the Four Worlds as under the presidency of the four letters of the Venerable Name, a certain letter of the four being allotted to each World, as also was a special mode of writing the four-lettered name appropriate thereto; and, indeed in that system it is taught that the order of the Elements both macrocosmic and microcosmic, on every plane, is directly controlled by the 'revolution of the name.' That Name is associated with the Æthers of the Elements and is thus considered as a Universal Law; it is the power which marshals the creative host, summed up in the Demiurgus, Hypezokos, or Flower of Fire.

¶Reference may here be made to the psychic anatomy of the human being according to Plato. He places the intellect in the head; the Soul endowed with some of the passions, such as fortitude, in the heart; while another Soul, of which the appetites, desires and grosser passions are its faculties, about the stomach and the spleen.

¶So, the Chaldæan doctrine as recorded by Psellus, considered man to be composed of three kinds of Souls, which may be respectively called:

- First, the Intelligible, or divine soul,
- Second, the Intellect or rational soul, and
- Third, the Irrational, or passional soul.

This latter was regarded as subject to mutation, to be dissolved and perish at the death of the body.

[[Of the Intelligible, or divine soul, the Oracles teach that *it is a bright fire, which, by the power of the Father, remaineth immortal, and is Mistress of Life*; its power may be dimly apprehended through regenerate phantasy and when the sphere of the Intellect has ceased to respond to the images of the passional nature.

[[Concerning the rational soul, the Chaldæans taught that it was possible for it to assimilate itself unto the divinity on the one hand, or the irrational soul on the other. *Things divine, we read, cannot be obtained by mortals whose intellect is directed to the body alone, but those only who are stripped of their garments, arrive at the summit.*

[[To the three Souls to which reference has been made, the Chaldæans moreover allotted three distinct vehicles: that of the divine Soul was immortal, that of the rational soul by approximation became so; while to the irrational soul was allotted what was called 'the image,' that is, the astral form of the physical body.

[[Physical life thus intergrates three special modes of activity, which upon the dissolution of the body are respectively involved in the web of fate consequent upon incarnate energies in three different destinies.

[[The Oracles urge men to devote themselves to things divine, and not to give way to the promptings of the irrational soul, for, to such as fail herein, it is significantly said, *Thy vessel the beasts of the earth shall inhabit.*

¶ The Chaldæans assign the place of the Image, the vehicle of the irrational soul, to the Lunar Sphere; it is probable that by the Lunar Sphere was meant something more than the orb of the Moon, the whole sublunary region, of which the terrestrial earth is, as it were, the centre. At death, the rational Soul rose above the lunar influence provided always the past permitted that happy release. Great importance was attributed to the way in which the physical life was passed during the sojourn of the Soul in the tenement of flesh, and frequent are the exhortations to rise to communion with those Divine powers, to which nought but the highest Theurgy can pretend.

¶ *Let the immortal depth of your soul lead you, says an Oracle, but earnestly raise your eyes upwards.* Taylor comments upon this in the following beautiful passage: "By the eyes are to be understood all the gnostic powers of the Soul, for when these are extended the Soul becomes replete with a more excellent life and divine illumination; and is, as it were, raised above itself."

¶ Of the Chaldæan Magi it might be truly said that they "among dreams did first discriminate the truthful vision!" for they were certainly endowed with a far reaching perception both mental and spiritual; attentive to images, and fired with mystic fervours, they were something more than mere theorists, but were also practical exemplars of the philosophy they taught. Life on the plains of Chaldæa, with its mild nights and jewelled skies, tended to foster the interior unfoldment; in early life the disciples of the Magi learnt to resolve the Bonds of proscription and enter the immeasurable region. One Ora-

cle assures us that, *The girders of the soul, which give her breathing are easy to be unloosed*, and elsewhere we read of the *melody of the Ether* and of the *Lunar clashings*, experiences which testify to the reality of their occult methods.

¶The Oracles assert that the impressions of characters and other divine visions appear in the Ether. The Chaldæan philosophy recognized the ethers of the Elements as the subtle media through which the operation of the grosser elements is effected—by the grosser elements I mean what we know as Earth, Air, Water and Fire—the principles of dryness and moisture, of heat and cold. These subtle ethers are really the elements of the ancients, and seem at an early period to have been connected with the Chaldæan astrology, as the signs of the Zodiac were connected with them. The twelve signs of the Zodiac are permutations of the ethers of the elements—four elements with three variations each; and according to the preponderance of one or another elemental condition in the constitution of the individual, so were his natural inclinations deduced therefrom. Thus when in the astrological jargon it was said that a man had Aries rising, he was said to be of a fiery nature, his natural tendencies being active, energetic and fiery, for in the constitution of such a one the fiery ether predominates. And these ethers were stimulated or endowed with a certain kind of vibration, by their Presidents, the Planets; these latter being thus suspended in orderly disposed zones. Unto the Planets, too, colour and sound were also attributed; the planetary colours are connected with the ethers, and

each of the Planetary forces was said to have special dominion over, or affinity with, one or the other of the Zodiacal constellations. Communion with the hierarchies of these constellations formed a part of the Chaldæan theurgy, and in a curious fragment it is said: *If thou often invokest it* (the celestial constellation called the Lion) *then when no longer is visible unto thee the vault of the Heavens, when the stars have lost their light the lamp of the Moon is veiled, the Earth abideth not, and around thee darts the lightning flame, then all things will appear to thee in the form of a Lion!* The Chaldæans like the Egyptians, appear to have had a highly developed appreciation of colours, an evidence of their psychic susceptibility. The use of bright colours engenders the recognition of subsisting variety and stimulates that perception of the mind which energizes through imagination, or the operation of images. The Chaldæan method of contemplation appears to have been to identify the self with the object of contemplation; this is of course identical with the process of Indian Yoga, and is an idea which appears replete with suggestion; as it is written, *He assimilates the images to himself, casting them around his own form.* But we are told, *All divine natures are incorporeal, but bodies are bound in them for your sakes.*

¶ The subtle ethers, of which I have spoken, served in their turn as it were for the garment of the divine Light; for the Oracles teach that beyond these again *A solar world and endless Light subsist!* This Divine Light was the object of all veneration. Do not think that what was intended thereby was the Solar Light we know: *The inerratic sphere of the starless above* is an unmistakable expression and

therein *the more true sun* has place: Theosophists will appreciate the significance of *the more true sun*, for according to *The Secret Doctrine* the Sun we see is but the physical vehicle of a more transcendent splendour.

[[Some strong Souls were able to reach up to the Light by their own power: *The mortal who approaches the fire shall have Light from the divinity, and unto the persevering mortal the blessed immortals are swift.* But what of those of a lesser stature? Were they by inability precluded from such illumination? *Others, we read, even when asleep, He makes fruitful from his own strength.* That is to say, some men acquire divine knowledge through communion with Divinity in sleep. This idea has given rise to some of the most magnificent contributions to later literature; it has since been thoroughly elaborated by Porphyry and Synesius. The eleventh Book of the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius and the *Vision of Scipio* ably vindicate this; and, although no doubt every Christian has heard that *He giveth unto his beloved in sleep*, few indeed, realize the possibility underlying that conception.

[[What, it may be asked, were the views of the Chaldeans with respect to terrestrial life: Was it a spirit of pessimism, which led them to hold this in light esteem? Or, should we not rather say that the keynote of their philosophy was an immense spiritual optimism? It appears to me that the latter is the more true interpretation. They realized that beyond the confines of matter lay a more perfect existence, a truer realm of which terrestrial administration is but a too often travestied reflection. They sought as we seek now, the Good, the Beautiful and the True, but they did not hasten to the Outer in

the thirst for sensation, but with a finer perception realized the true Utopia to be within.

¶ And the first step in that admirable progress was a return to the simple life; hardly, indeed, a return for most of the Magi were thus brought up from birth.* The hardihood engendered by the rugged life, coupled with that wisdom which directed their association, rendered these children of Nature peculiarly receptive of Nature's Truths. *stoop not down, says the Oracle, to the darkly splendid world, for a precipice lieth beneath the Earth, a descent of seven steps, and therein is established the throne of an evil and fatal force. stoop not down unto that darkly splendid world, defile not thy brilliant flame with the earthly dross of matter, stoop not down for its splendour is but seeming, it is but the habitation of the sons of the unhappy.* No more beautiful formulation of the Great Truth that exterior and sensuous life is death to the highest energies of the Soul could possibly have been uttered: but to such as by purification and the practice of virtue rendered themselves worthy, encouragement was given, for we read, *the higher powers build upon the body of the holy man.*

¶ The law of Karma was as much a feature of the Chaldean philosophy as it is of the Theosophy of today: from a passage in Ficinus, we read, "The Soul perpetually runs and passes through all things in a certain space of time, which being performed it is presently compelled to pass back again through all things and unfold a similar web of generation in the World, according to Zoroaster,

* They renounced rich attire and the wearing of gold. Their raiment was white upon occasion; their beds the ground, and their food nothing but herbs, cheese and bread.

who thinks that as often as the same causes return, the same effects will in like manner return."

¶ This is of course the explanation of the proverb that "History repeats itself," and is very far from the superstitious view of fate. Here each one receives his deserts according to merit or demerit, and these are the bonds of life; but the Oracles say, *Enlarge not thy destiny*, and they urge men to *Explore the River of the soul, so that although you have become a servant to body, you may again rise to the order from which you descended, joining works to sacred reason!*

¶ To this end we are commended to learn the Intelligible which exists beyond the mind, that divine portion of the being which exists beyond Intellect: and this it is only possible to grasp with the flower of the mind. *Understand the intelligible with the extended flame of an extended intellect.* To Zoroaster also was attributed the utterance "who knows himself knows all things in himself;" while it is elsewhere suggested that *The paternal mind sowed symbols in the soul.* But such priceless knowledge was possible only to the Theurgists who, we are told, *Fall not so as to be ranked with the herd that are in subjection to fate.* The divine light cannot radiate in an imperfect microcosm, even as the clouds obscure the Sun; for of such as make ascent to the most divine of speculations in a confused and disordered manner, with unhallowed lips, or unwashed feet, the progressions are imperfect, the impulses are vain and the paths are dark.

¶ Although destiny, our destiny, may be "written in the Stars" yet it was the mission of the divine Soul to raise

the human Soul above the circle of necessity, and the Oracles give Victory to that Masterly Will, which

*Hews the wall with might of magic,
Breaks the palisade in pieces,
Hews to atoms seven pickets . . .
speaks the Master words of knowledge !*

¶The means taken to that consummation consisted in the training of the Will and the elevation of the imagination, a divine power which controls consciousness: *Believe yourself to be above body, and you are*, says the Oracle; it might have added "Then shall regenerate phantasy disclose the symbols of the Soul." But it is said *on beholding yourself fear ! i. e.*, the imperfect self.

¶Everything must be viewed as ideal by him who would understand the ultimate perfection.

¶Will is the grand agent in the mystic progress; its rule is all potent over the nervous system. By Will the fleeting vision is fixed on the treacherous waves of the astral Light; by Will the consciousness is impelled to commune with the divinity: yet there is not One Will, but three Wills—the Wills, namely, of the Divine, the Rational and Irrational Souls—to harmonize these is the difficulty.

¶It is selfishness which impedes the radiation of Thought, and attaches to body. This is scientifically true and irrespective of sentiment, the selfishness which reaches beyond the necessities of body is pure vulgarity.

¶A picture which to the cultured eye beautifully portrays a given subject, nevertheless appears to the savage

a confused patchwork of streaks, so the extended perceptions of a citizen of the Universe are not grasped by those whose thoughts dwell within the sphere of the personal life.

[[The road to the 'Summum Bonum' lies therefore through self-sacrifice, the sacrifice of the lower to the higher, for behind that Higher Self lies the concealed form of the Ancient of Days, the synthetical Being of Divine Humanity.

[[These things are grasped by Soul; the song of the Soul is alone heard in the adytum of God-nourished Silence !

PREFACE

Thomas Stanley



THE MOST CONSIDERABLE REMAINS OF THE Chaldaick Philosophy are those *Oracles* which go under the name of Zoroaster; some indeed condemn them as supposititious, forged by some pseudo-Christian Greek*, perhaps the rather because the followers of Prodicus the heretick boasted that they had the secret books of Zoroaster.† But this seems less probable, in regard they lie dispersed among several authors; nor are they to be neglected, in that they have been held in great veneration by the Platonic Philosophers. Which sufficiently also argues, that they are none of the writings charged by Porphyrius‡ upon the Gnostics, as forged by them under the name of Zoroaster, since those, as he acknowledged, were by the Platonic Philosophers, (of whom he instanced Plotinus and Amelius) rejected and demonstrated to be spurious and supposititious.

Some argue that they are not Chaldæan, because many times accommodated to the Greek style; but there are in them many so harsh and exotic expressions, as discover them to be originally foreign; and where they

* Beza, *Historie Ecclesicstique*.

† Clement, *Stromateis*.

‡ Porphyry, *Vitæ Plotinus*.

agree in terms with that which is proper to the Greek Philosophy, we may say of them as Iamblichus* upon another occasion, (on the writings that go under the name of Hermes Trismegistus) as they are published under the name of Zoroaster, so also they contain the doctrine of Zoroaster, though they frequently speak in the style of the Greeks. For they were translated out of Chaldee into Greek by persons skillful in the Greek Philosophy.

To persuade us that they are genuine and not of Greek invention, Pico dela Mirandula professed to Ficinus, that he had the Chaldee original in his possession. §:—

I was (saith he) forcibly taken off from other things, and instigated to the Arabic and Chaldæan learning by certain books in both those languages, which came to my hands, not accidentally, but doubtless by the disposal of God, in favour of my studies. Hear the inscriptions, and you will believe it. The Chaldæan Books, (if they are books, and not rather treasures) are the Oracles of Aben Esra, Zoroaster, and Melchior, Magi: in which those things which are faulty and defective in the Greek, are read perfect and entire. There is also, an exposition by the Chaldæan wise-men upon these Oracles, short and knotty, but full of mysteries; there is also a book of the doctrines of the Chaldæan Theology, and upon it a Divine and copious discourse of the Persians, Greeks, and Chaldæans.

Thus Pico della Mirandula, after whose death these books

* Iamblichus, *De Mysteriis*.

§ Pico, *Epistles*.

were found by Ficinus, but so worn and illegible that nothing could be made out of them .

Further, to confirm that these Oracles were translated into the Greek by persons skillful in the Greek Philosophy let us call to mind that Berossus* introduced the writings of the Chaldæans concerning Astronomy and Philosophy among the Greeks; and that Julianus the son, a Chaldæan Philosopher, † wrote theurgic Oracles in verse, and other secrets of that science: and probably, if these were no part of that Chaldæan learning which Berossus first rendered in Greek, they yet might be some of the Theurgic Oracles (for such the title speaks them) of Julianus; for some of them are cited by Proclus as such. From the account which Pico della Mirandula gives of those in his possession, to which were added a comment and a discourse of the doctrines of the Chaldæan Theology, it might be conjectured, that what is delivered to us by Pletho and Psellus, who, besides the Oracles, give us a commentary on them, together with a Chaldæan summary, was extracted out of that author which Pico della Mirandula describes to have been of the same kind and method, but much more perfect and copious.

The title of Oracles was perhaps not given to them only metaphorically to express the Divine excellence of their doctrine, but as conceived indeed to have been delivered by the Oracle itself; for Stephanus ‡ testifies that the Chaldæans had an Oracle which they held in no less veneration than the Greeks did theirs at Delphi.

* Josephus, *Contra Apion* I.

† Suidas, *In Voce Julianus*.

‡ Stephanus, *Dæ Urbibus*.

This opinion may be confirmed by the high testimonies which the Platonic Philosophers gave of them, calling them the Assyrian Theology revealed by God, and the Theology delivered by God.* And Proclus elsewhere having cited as from the Gods, one of those Oracles which speaks of the Ideas, (a Platonic doctrine) adds, that hereby the Gods declared the subsistence of Ideas, and acquiesceth as satisfied that the Gods themselves ratify the contemplation of Plato.

Some of these Oracles which escaped the injuries of time, were first published by Ludovicus Tiletanus in 1563 at Paris, together with the commentaries of Gemistus Pletho, under the title : *magical oracles of the magi descended from zoroaster*; the same were afterwards translated and put forth by Jacobus Marthamus, and lastly, together with the commentary of Psellus also, by Johannes Opsopætus at Paris in 1607.

These, by Francesco Patrizzi were enlarged with a plentiful addition out of Proclus, Hermias, Simplicius, Damascius, Synesius, Olympiodorus, Nicephorus, and Arnobius: encreasing them by his own account to 324, and reducing them for the better perspicuity to certain general heads, put them forth, and translated them into Latin in 1593. They were afterwards put forth in Latin by Otho Heurnius in 1619 under the title: *The sincere magical oracles of zoroaster king of bactria, and prince of the magi*; but Heurnius under the pretence of putting them into good Latin, as he calls it, and polishing them with a rougher file, has patched up and corrupted what Patrizzi delivered faithfully and sincerely, endeavouring to

* Proclus, *In Timæus*.

put these fragments into a continued discourse, which in themselves are nothing coherent, but dispersed among several authors.

Patrizzi indeed hath taken much learned pains in the collection of them, but with less regard to their measures and numbers, and, as from thence may be shown sometimes of the words themselves. Nor is there any certain means to redress this omission by comparing them with the authors, out of which he took them, since few of those are extant, neither doth he, as he professes to have done affix the names of the authors to the several fragments, except to some few at the beginning. However, we shall give them here according to his edition, that being the most perfect; together with such additions as we meet withal elsewhere, and some conjectures to supply the defect we mentioned.

Whereas many of the Oracles are so broken and obscure, that they might at first sight seem rather ridiculous than weighty, yet he who shall consider, that as many of them as are explained by Pletho, Psellus, and others, would without those explanations seem no less absurd than the rest, but being explained, disclose the learning of the Chaldæans in a profound and extraordinary manner, will easily believe all the rest, even those which appear least intelligible, to be of the same kind and consequently ought no more to have been omitted than any of the rest.

THOMAS STANLEY
London [1701]

THE CHALDÆAN ORACLES

(in English translation)

THE CHALDÆAN ORACLES OF JULIANUS

edited & translated into English by
Thomas Stanley



MONAD DYAD TRIAD



HERE *the Paternal Monad is.*

The Monad is enlarged, which generates Two.

For the Dyad sits by him, and glitters with

Intellectual sections.

*And to Govern all things, and to Order all things not
Ordered,*

*For in the whole World shineth the Triad, over which
the Monad Rules.* 5

This Order is the beginning of all section.

*For the Mind of the Father said, that all things be cut
into three.*

Whose Will assented, and all things were divided.

*For the Mind of the Æternal Father said into three,
Governing all things by Mind.*

*And there appeared in it (the Triad) virtue and
Wisdom.* 10

And Multiscient Verity.

This way floweth the shape of the Triad, being præ-existent.

Not the first (Essence) but where they are measured.

For thou must conceive that all things serve these three Principles.

The first course is sacred, but in the middle. 15

Another the third, ærial; which cherished the Earth in Fire.

And Fountain of Fountains, and of all Fountains.

The Matrix containing all things.

Thence abundantly springs forth the Generation of multivariuous Matter.

*Thence extracted a prester the flower of glowing Fire, 20
Flashing into the Cavities of the world: for all things
from thence*

Begin to extend downwards their admirable Beams.

FATHER MIND



THE Father hath snatched away himself; neither hath he shut up his own fire in his Intellectual Power.

[All things have issued from that one fire.]*

For the Father perfected all things, and delivered them
over to the second Mind,

which the whole Race of Men call the first 25

light begotten of the Father; for he alone

having crop'd the Flower of the Mind from the Father's
Vigour.

For the Paternal self-begotten Mind understanding [his]
Work,

sowed in all the fiery bond of Love,

that all things might continue loving for ever. 30

Neither those things which are intellectually context in
the light of the Father in all things.

That being the Elements of the World they might per-
sist in Love.

For it is the Bound of the paternal Depth, and the
Fountain of the Intellectuals.

Neither went he forth, but abode in the paternal Depth,
and in the Adytum according to Divinely nourished
silence. 35

For the Fire once above, shutteth not his Power
into Matter by Actions, but by the Mind.

*Aude, fragment 13.

For the paternal Mind hath sowed symbols thro' the
World,

Which understandeth Intelligibles, and beautifieth in-
effables.

Wholly Division and Indivisible. 40

By Mind he contains the Intelligibles, but introduceth
sense into the Worlds.

By Mind he contains the Intelligibles, but introduceth
soul into the Worlds.

MIND INTELLIGIBLES INTELLECTUALS



AND of the one Mind, the intelligible (Mind).

For the Mind is not without the intelligible;
it exists not without it.

These are Intellectuals, and Intelligibles, which being
understood, understand. 45

For the Intelligible is the Ailment of the Intelligent.

Learn the Intelligible, since it exists beyond the Mind.

And of the Mind which moves the Emphyreal Heaven.

For the Framers of the fiery World is the Mind of the
Mind.

You who know certainly the supermundane paternal
Depth. 50

The intelligible is predominant over all section.

There is something Intelligible, which it behooves thee
to understand with the flower of the Mind.

For if thou enclinest thy Mind, thou shalt understand
this also;

Yet understanding something [of it] thou shalt not
understand this wholly; for it is a Power

Of Circumlucid strength, glittering with Intellectual sec-
tions (Rays). 55

But it behooves not to consider this intelligible with
vehemence of Intellection,

But with the ample flame of the ample Mind, which
measureth all things,

Except this Intelligible: but it behooves to understand
this.

For if thou enclinest thy Mind, thou shalt understand
this also,

Not fixedly, but having a pure turning Eye [thou
must] 60

Extend the empty mind of thy soul towards the Intel-
ligible,

That thou mayest learn the Intelligible, for it exists beyond the Mind.

But every mind understands this God; for the Mind is not

Without the Intelligible, neither is the Intelligible without the Mind.

To the Intellectual Presters of the Intellectual fire, all things 65

By yielding are subservient to the persuasive Counsel of the Father.

And to understand, and always to remain in a restless whirling.

But insinuating into Worlds the Venerable Name in a sleepless Whirling.

Fountains and Principles; to turn, and always to remain in a restless Whirling.

By reason of the terrible menace of the Father. 70

Under two Minds the Life generating Fountain souls is contained;

And the Maker, who self operating framed the World.

Who sprang first out of the Mind.

Cloathing Fire with Fire, binding them together, to mingle

The Fountaneous Craters, preserves the flower of his own
fire. 75

He glittereth with Intellectual sections, and filled all
things with Love.

Like swarms they are carried, being broken,
About the Bodies of the World.

That things unfashioned may be fashioned.

What the Mind speaks, it speaks by understanding. 80
Power is with them, Mind is from Her.

IYNGES IDEAS PRINCIPLES



THESE being many ascend into the lucid
worlds.

Springing into them, and in which there are
three Tops.

Beneath them lies the chief of Immaterials.

Principles which have understood the intelligible works
of the Father. 85

Disclosed them in sensible works as in Bodies;

Being (as it were) the Ferry-man betwixt the Father and
Matter.

And producing manifest Images of unmanifest things.

*And inscribing unmanifest things in the manifest frame
of the World.*

*The Mind of the Father made a jarring Noise, under-
standing by vigorous Counsel,* 90

*Omniform Ideas; and flying out of one Fountain
They sprang forth; for, from the Father was the Counsel
and End,*

*By which they are connected to the Father, by alternate
Life from several Vehicles.*

*But they were divided, being by Intellectual Fire dis-
tributed* 95

*Into other Intellectuals: for the King did set before the
multiform World*

*An Intellectual incorruptible Pattern; this Print through
the World he promoting, of whose form*

According to which the World appeared

*Beautified with all kind of Ideas, of which there is one
fountain,*

*Out of which came rushing forth others undistributed,
being broken about the Bodies of the World, which
through the vast Recesses,* 100

Like swarms, are carried round' about every way.

*Intellectual Notions from the paternal Fountain cropping
the flower of Fire.*

*In the point of sleepless time, of this Primigenious Idea.
The first self-budding fountain of the Father budded.*

*Intelligent Iynges do (themselves) also understand from
the Father:* 105

*By unspeakable Counsels, being moved so as to under-
stand.*

HECATE, SYNOCHES, TELETARCHS.



*OR out of him spring all
Implacable Thunders, and the Prester-receiving
cavities*

*Of the Entirely-lucid strength of Father-begotten Hecate
And he who begirds (viz) the flower of Fire, and the
strong* 110

spirit of the Poles fiery above.

*He gave to his Presters that they should guard the Tops.
Mingling the power of his own strength in the synoches.*

O how the world hath intellectual guides inflexible!

*Because she is the Operatrix, because she is the Dispens-
atrix of Life-giving fire.* 115

*Because also it fills the Life producing Bosom of Hecate.
And instills in the synoches the enlivning strength
Of potent fire.*

*But they are guardians of the works of the Father.
For he disguises himself, professing* 120
*To be cloathed with the Print of the Images.
The Teletarchs are comprehended with the synoches,
To these Intellectual Presters of intellectual fire,
All things are subservient.*

But as many as serve the Material synoches, 125
*Have put on the completely-Armed Vigour of resounding
Light.*

*With tripple strength fortifying the soul and the Mind.
To put into the Mind the symbol of Variety.
And not to walk dispersedly on the Empyræal Channels;
But stiffly* 130
*These frame Indivisibles, and sensibles,
And Corporiforms, and things destin'd to Matter.*

SOUL. NATURE.



*FOR the soul being a bright fire, by the power
of the Father
Remains Immortal, and is Mistress of Life;*

*And possesseth many Complexions of the Cavities of the
World:* 135

*For it is in imitation of the Mind; but that which is
born hath something of the Body.*

*The Channels being intermixed, she performs the works
of incorruptible Fire.*

*Next the paternal Conceptions I (the soul) dwell,
warm, heating all things; for he did put*

The Mind in the soul, the soul in the dull Body. 140

*Of us the Father of Gods and Men imposed,
Abundantly animating Light, Fire, Æther, Worlds.*

*For natural Works co-exist with the Intellectual Light of
the Father, for the soul which adorn'd the great
Heaven, and adorning with the Father.*

But her Horns are fixed above, 145

*But about the shoulders of the Goddess, immense Nature
is exalted.*

*Again, indefatigable Nature commands the Worlds and
works.*

The Heaven drawing an eternal course may run.

*And the swift sun might come about the Center as he
useth.*

Look not into the fatal name of this Nature. 150

THE WORLD



HE Maker who operating by himself framed
the World.

And there was another Bulk of fire,
By it-self operating all things that the Body of the World
might be perfected,
That the World might be manifest and not seem Mem-
branous.

The whole World of Fire, and Water, and Earth, 155
And all-nourishing Æther,
The unexpressible and expressible Watch-words of the
World.

One Life by another from the distributed Channels
Passing from above to the opposite Part,
Through the Center of the Earth; and another fifth
Middle: 160

Fiery Channel, where it descends to the material Channels
Life-bringing fire,
stirring himself up with the Goal of resounding Light.
Another fountainous, which guides the Empyreal World.
The Center from which all (Lines) which way soever are

equal.

165

For the paternal Mind sowed symbols through the World.
 For the Center of every one is carried betwixt the Fathers.
 For it is in imitation of the Mind, but that which is
 born hath something of the Body.

HEAVEN

FOR the Father congregated seven Firmaments
 of the World;
 Circumscribing Heaven in a round Figure, 170

He fixed a great company of inerratic stars,
 And he constituted a septenary of erratic Animals.
 placing Earth in the middle, and Water in the middle of
 the Earth.

The Air above these.

He fixed a great company of inerratic stars, 175
 to be carri'd not by laborious and troublesome Tension,
 but by a settlement which hath not Error.

He fixed a great company of inerratic stars,
 forcing Fire to Fire,

to be carried by a settlement which hath not Error. 180
 He constituted them six; casting into the midst

*The fire of the sun,
suspending their Disorder in well-ordered Zones.
For the Goddess brings forth the great sun, and the bright
MOON.*

*O Æther, son, spirit, Guides of the Moon and of the
Air; 185*

*And of the solar Circles, and of the Monthly clashings.
And of the Ærial Recesses.*

*The Melody of the Æther, and of the Passages of the sun,
and Moon, and of the Air,*

*And the wide Air, and the Lunar Course, and the Pole
of the sun.*

*Collecting it, and receiving the Melody of the Æther, 190
And of the sun, and of the Moon, and of all that are
contained in the Air.*

*Fire, the Derivation of fire, and the Dispenser of fire;
His Hair pointed is seen by his native Light;
Hence comes Saturn.*

*The sun Assessor beholding the pure Pole; 195
And the Ætherial Course, and the vast Motion of the
MOON,*

*And the Ærial fluxions,
And the great sun, and the bright Moon.*

TIME

THE Mundane God; *Æternal, Infinite.*
Young, and Old, of a spiral form. 200
 And another fountainous, who guides the Em-
 pyreal Heaven.

SOUL. BODY. MAN.

IT behooves thee to hasten to the Light, and
 to the beams of the Father;
 From whence was sent to thee a soul cloathed
 with much Mind.

*These things the Father conceived, and so the mortal was
 animated*

For the paternal Mind sowed symbols in souls; 205

Replenishing the soul with profound Love

*For the Father of the Gods and Men placed the Mind in
 the soul;*

And in the Body he established you.

For all Divine things are incorporeal.

But Bodies are bound in them for your sakes: 210

B

Incorporeals not being able to contain the bodies.

By reason of the Corporeal Nature in which you are concentrated.

And they are in God, attracting strong flames.

Descending from the Father, from which descending the soul

Corps of Empyrean fruits the soul-nourishing flower. 215

And therefore conceiving the Worlds of the Father

They avoid the audacious wing of fatal Destiny;

And though you see this soul manumitted,

Yet the Father sends another to make up the Number.

Certainly these are superlatively blessed above all 220

souls; they are sent forth from Heaven to Earth,

And those rich souls which have unexpressible Fates;

As many of them (O King) as proceed from shining Thee,

or from

Jove Himself, under the strong power of (his) Thread.

Let the immortal Depth of thy soul be predominant; but

all thy eyes

225

Extend upward.

stoop not down to the dark world,

Beneath which continually lies a faithless Depth, and

Hades

Dark all over, squallid, delighting in Images, unintel-
ligible,

Precipititious, Craggy, a Depth; always Rolling, 230

Always espousing an opacous, idle-breathless Body,

And the Light-hating World, and the winding currents,

By which many things are swallowed up.

Seek Paradise;

Seek thou the way of the soul, whence or by what Order

Having served the Body, to the same place from [235

which thou didst flow.

Thou must rise up again, joining Action to sacred speech,

stoop not down, for a Precipice lies below on the Earth;

Drawing through the Ladder which hath seven steps,

Beneath which

Is the Throne of Necessity.

240

Enlarge not thou thy Destiny.

The soul of Man will in a manner clasp God to herself;

Having nothing Mortal, she is wholly inebriated from

God:

For she boasts Harmony, in which the mortal Body exists.

If thou extend the fiery Mind

245

To the work of Piety, thou shalt preserve the fluxible

Body.

*There's a room for the Image also in the circumlucid place.
Every way to the unfashioned soul stretch the Reins of
Fire.*

*The Fire-glowing Cognition hath the first Rank.
For the Mortal approaching to the Fire, shall have Light
from God.* 250

For to the slow Mortal the Gods are swift.

The Furies are stranglers of Men.

The bourgeons, even of ill Matter, are profitable good.

Let Hope nourish thee in the fiery Angelic Region.

But the paternal Mind accepts not her Will, 255

*Until she go out of Oblivion, and pronounce a
Word, inserting the remembrance of the pure paternal
symbol.*

*To these be gave the docible character of Life to be Com-
prehended.*

*Those that were asleep he made fruitful by his own
strength.*

Defile not the spirit nor deepen a superficies. 260

Leave not the dross of Matter on a Precipice.

Bring her not forth, least going forth she have something.

*The souls of those who quit the Body violently, are most
pure.*

*The ungirders of the soul, which give her breathing, are
easy to be loosed.*

*In the side sinister of Hecate, there is a Fountain of
Vertue;* 265

Which remains entire within, not emitting her virginity.

O Man the Machine of Boldest Nature!

subject not to thy Mind the vast measures of the Earth;

For the Plant of Truth is not upon Earth.

*Nor measure the Measures of the sun, gathering together
Canons;* 270

*He is moved by the Æternal Will of the Father, not for
thy sake.*

*Let alone the swift Course of the Moon: she runs ever
by the impulse of Necessity.*

*The Progression of the stars was not brought forth for
thy sake.*

*The ætherial wide flight of Birds is not veracious,
And the Dissections of Entrails and Victims all these are
toys,* 275

The supports of gainful Cheats; fly thou these

if thou intend to open the sacred Paradise of Piety

where virtue, wisdom, and Equity, are assembled.

For thy Vessel the Beastd of the Earth shall inhabit.

These the Earth bewails, even to their Children. 280

DÆMONS RITES



NATURE persuades there are pure Dæmons;
 The bourgeons, even all ill matter, are profit-
 able and good,
 But these things I revolve in the reclusive Temples of
 my Mind,
 Extending the like Fire sparkingly into the spaceous Air
 Or Fire unfigur'd, a Voice issuing forth. 285
 Or Fire abundant whizzing and winding about the Earth,
 But also to see a Horse more glittering than Light.
 Or a Boy on [thy] shoulders riding on a Horse,
 Fiery or adorned with Gold, or divested,
 Or shooting and standing on [thy] shoulders. 290
 If thou speak often to me, thou shalt see absolutely that
 which is spoken:
 For then neither appears the Cœlestial concave
 Bulk, nor do the stars shine: the light of the Moon is
 covered,
 The Earth stands not still, but all things appear Thunder.
 Invoke not the self-conspicuous Image of Nature; 295

For thou must not behold these before thy Body be
initiated.

When soothing souls they always reduce them from these
Mysteries.

Certainly out of the Cavities of the Earth spring Terres-
trial Dogs.

Which show no true figure to mortal Man.

Labour about the Hecatick strophalus. 300

Never change Barbarous Names;

For there are Names in every Nation given from God,

Which have an unspeakable power in Rites.

When thou seest a Sacred Fire without Form,
shining, flashingly through the depths of the World, 305

Hear the Voice of Fire.



ZOROASTRI ORACULA

(*in Latin translation*)

THE CHALDÆAN ORACLES OF JULIANUS

edited & translated into Latin by

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ZOROASTRI ORACULA

MONAS DYAS TRIAS



BI PATERNA MONAS EST.

Ampliata est Monas, quæ duo generat.

Duitas enim apud hunc sedet, & intellectualibus fulget sectionibus.

Et gubernare cuncta, & ordinare quodcunque non ordinatum.

Toto enim mundo lucet Trias, cujus Monas est princeps.

Principium omnis sectionis hic est ordo,

In tria namque Mens dixit Patris secari omnia,

Cujus voluntas annuit & jam omnia secta fuere.

In tria namque dixit Mens patris æterni,

Mente omnia gubernans.

Et apparuerunt in ipsa Virtus & Sapientia,

Et Multiscia Veritas.

Hinc fluit Triadis vultus ante essentiam,

Non primam, sed eam quæ mensuratur.

Principiis tribus hisce capias servire cuncta.

Et fons fontium, & fontium cunctorum.

Matrix continens cuncta.

Inde affatim exilit generatio multivariæ materiæ.
 Inde tractus prester exilis ignis flos,
 Mundorum indens cavitatibus. Omnia namque inde.
 Incipit deorsum tendere radios admirandos.

PATER & MENS



IPIPSUM RAPUIT PATER NEQUE SUÆ
 Potentiæ mentali claudens proprium ignem.
 Non enim a paterno Principio imperfectum
 quid rotatur.

Cuncta namque perfecit pater,
 Et menti tradidit secundæ,
 Quam primam vocat omne genus hominum.
 Patrogenia lux, multum namque sola
 E partis robore decrepens mentis florem.
 Opera enim intelligens paterna mens e se genita,
 Conctis inseminavit vinculum igni gravis amoris.
 Quo omnia maneant, tempus in interminatum amantia.
 Neque omnibus quæ patri mentaliter contexta monstret.
 Ut in amore maneant mundi elementa manentia.
 Habet ipsa intelligentia paternam mentem indere
 Omnibus fontibus & principatibus.
 Est enim finis paterni profundi, & fons mentalium .
 Neque progressus est, sed mansit in paterno profundo,
 Et in adyto, per Deo-nutrients silentium.
 Non enim in materiam, ignis trans primus
 Suam potentiam claudit operibus, sed mente.
 Symbolia enim paterna mens seminavit per mundum.
 Quæ intelligibilia intelligit, & ineffabilia exornat.

Tota partitio, & impartibilis.

Mente quidem continet intelligibilia, sensam vero inducit mundis.

Mente quidem continet intelligibilia, animam vero inducit mundis.

MENS INTELLIGIBILIA & MENTALIA



I UNIUS MENTIS INTELLIGIBILIS.

Non enim sine intelligibili mens est: non seorsium existit.

Quædam sane sunt mentalia & intelligibilia, quæcunque dum intelligunt intelliguntur.

Cibus vero intelligenti est intelligibile.

Disce intelligibile, quandoquidem extra mentem existit.

Et mentis, quæ Empyreum mundum ducit.

Mentis enim mens est quæ mundi est artifex ignei.

Qui supermundanum paternum profundum estis intelligentes.

Intelligibilis omnis sectionis princeps est.

Est enim quoddam intelligibile, quod oportet te intelligere mentis flore.

Vel enim inclines, ut mentem, & illud intellexeris.

Ut aliquid intelligens, non illud intelliges.

Est enim roboris circumquaque lucidi potentia,

Mentalibus fulgens sectionibus, non sane oportet

Vehementia intelligere intelligibile illud,

Sed mentis amplæ ampla flamma

Omnia metiente, præterquam intelligibile illud.

Opus ergo est hoc intelligere; nam si inclina veris.

Mentem tuam, etiam illud intelliges non parum.
 Sed purum converte oculum,
 Ferentem tuæ animæ tendere vacuum mentem.
 In intelligibile; ut discas intelligibile,
 Quandoquidem extra mentem existit.
 Deum hunc intelligit omnis mens, non enim sine
 Mente est intelligibili, & intelligibile non sine mente
 existit.

Ignis mentalis mentalibus prætoribus cuncta
 Cedunt servientia, Patris persuasorio consilio.
 Et intelligere, semperque manere impigra vertigine.
 Fronte & principii, vertere, semperque manere impigra
 vertigine.

Sed nomen venerandum insomni vertigini
 Mundis indens, terribiles ob patris minas.
 Sub duabus mentibus vitigenius fons continetur
 animarum.

Et facta, qui per se operans fabrefecit mundum,
 Qui ex mente exiliit primus.
 Indutus igne ignem, Vinculorum ut temperet
 Fontanos crateras, sui ignis florem sustinens
 Mentalibus fulget sectionibus, amoreque implevit omnia.
 Infigurata figurans.
 Examinibus similes feruntur, perrumpentes
 Per mundi corpora.

Quæ mens dicit, intelligendo sane dicit.
 Potentia quidem cum illis, Mens vero ab illa.

IYNGES IDEÆ PRINCIPIA



ULTÆ QUIDEM HÆ SCANDUNT LUCIDOS MUNDOS.
 Insilientes, & in quibus summitates sunt tres.
 Subjectum ipsis est principale partum.
 Principia; quæ patris opera intelligentes intel-
 ligibilia

Sensibilibus operibus, & corporibus revelarunt.

Transvectrices stantes dicere patri & materiæ.

Et manifesta imitamina latentium operantes.

Et latentia in manifestam Cosmopœiam inscribentes.

Mens patris striduit, intelligens vigente consilio

Omniformes Ideas. Fonte vero ab uno evolantes

Exilierunt. A parte enim erat consilium & finis.

Per quæ conjunguntur patri, per aliam atque aliam.

Vitam, a compartitis canalibus.

Sed partitæ sunt, mentali igne dispositæ,

In alias mentales: mundo namque rex multiformi

Proposuit mentalem typum incorruptibilem, non per
 mundum.

Vestigium promovens formæ per quæ mundus apparuit.

Omnifariam ideis graciosus, quarum unus fons.

Ex quo strident dispertitæ aliæ,

Immensæ, perrumpentes mundi circa corpora:

Quæ per sinus immensos, examinibus similes,

Feruntur conversæ: circumque alibi aliæ.

Conceptiones mentales fonte a paterno

Multum decerpentes ignis florem.

Infomnis temporis. Vigor principigeniæ ideæ

Prima, e patris missa est: cujus per se florens fons.
 Intellectæ Iynges a patre intelligunt & ipsæ.
 Consiliis in effabilibus moventur ut intelligant.

HECATE SYNOCHES & TELETARCHÆ



X IPSO ENIM OMNES EXILIUNT
 Amilictique fulmines, & presterocapaces sinus
 Ominlucidæ vigoris patrogenii Hecates.
 Et Hypezocus ignis flos, & fortis
 Spiritus polorum, igenos trans.
 Custodire presteribus suis summitates dedit.
 Immiscens vigoris proprium robur in Synochis.
 Quo mundus habeat mentales sustentatores inflexibiles.
 Quia operatrix, quia largitrix est ignis vitiferi.
 Quia & vitigenium implet Hecates sinum.
 Et influit Synochis vigorem vitidonum ignis
 Magni potentis.
 Sed & Custodes operum sunt patris.
 Assimilat enim se ipsum; ille urgens
 Typum induere idolorum.
 Teletarchæ comprehensi sunt cum Synochis.
 His vero mentalis mentalibus presteribus
 Omnia parent servientia.
 Sed & quæcunque msterialibus serviunt Synochis.
 Induti armorum vigorem luminis resonantis.
 Vigore Triglichio, mentem animamq[ue]; armantem.
 Pervarium Synthema jacere ratiocinio.
 Neque super incedere empyreis sparsim canalibus,
 Sed collectim.

Hi vero individua, & sensibilia efficiunt,
Et corporiformia, & destinata in materiam.

ANIMA NATURA



QUONIAM ANIMA IGNIS POTENTIA PATRIS EX-
istens lucidus,

Immortalisque manet, & vitæ domina est:

Et tenet mundi multas plenitudines sinuum.

Mentis enim imitamen est, partum vero habet quid
corporis.

Mistis vero canalibus, ignis incorruptibilis opera efficiens.

Post vero Paternas conceptiones anima, ego, habito:

Calida, animans omnia, reposuit enim.

Mentem sane in anima, animam vero in corpore inerti.

Nostri imposuit pater hominumque Deumque.

Affatim animans lucem, ignem, æthera, mundos.

Coexistunt namque naturalia opera mentali splendori

Patris. Anima enim est quæ ornavit magnum.

Cœlum & quæ ornat simul cum patre.

Cornua & ipsius firmata sunt sursum.

Humeros vero circa Deæ natura immensa attollitur.

Imperat rursus natura infatigabilis mundisque
operibusque:

Cœlum ut currat sursum æternum trahens:

Et celer sol circa centrum, ut assuetus veniat.

Non naturæ inspicias fatale nomen ejus.

MUNDUS



FACTOR QUI PER SE OPERANS FABREFECIT
mundum.

Etenim quædam ignis moles erat altera: hæc
Omina

Per se efficiens, ut corpus mundanum——

Mundus ut manifestus, & non videatur membraneus.

Totum mundum ex igne, & aqua, & terra,

Et omni-alente ære.

Ineffabilia, & fabilia synthemata mundi.

Aliam per aliam vitam, a partitis canalibus.

Desuper permeantis in oppositum.

Per centrum terræ, & quintum medium, alium.

igneum, ubi descendit usque ad materiales canales.

Vitifer ignis.

Centro incitans Seipsum lumine resonante.

Fontanum alium, qui Empyreum mundum ducit.

Centrum a quo omnes usque quo forte æquales fuerint.

Symbola enim paterna mens seminavit per mundum.

Medium inter patris singulæ centrum fertur.

Mentis enim imitamen est: quod vero patrum est habet
quod corporis.



CÆLUM



SEPTEM ENIM IN MOLES FORMAVIT PATER
firmamenta mundorum:

Cœlum rotunda figura circumcludens.

Fixitque multum cœtum astrorum

inerrantium,

Animaliumque errantium constituit septenarium.

Terram in medio posuit, aquamque in terræ sinibus.

Aeremque supra hæc.

Fixitque multum cœtum astrorum inerrantium.

Tensione, non laboriosa mala.

Sed fixatione errorem non habente in motu.

Fixitque multum cœtum astrorum inerrantium.

Ignem ad ignem cogens.

Fixione errorem non habente in motu.

Sex eos constituit, septimum Solis,

In medium jaciens ignem.

Inordinationem eorum bene-ordinatis suspendens zonis.

Parturit enim Dea Solemque magnum, & splendidam

Lunam.

Æther, Sol, spiritus Lunæ, aeris ductores,

Solariumque circulatorum, & lunarium est crepituum,

Sinuumque aereorum.

Ætheris cantus, Solisque, & Lunæ canalium, & aeris.

Et latus aer, lunarisque cursus, & polus Solis.

Colligit ipsum, accipiens ætheris harmoniam,

Solisque; Lunæque, & quæcunque aere continentur.

Ignis ignis derivatio, & ignis penu.

Crines enim in acutum nato lumini conspiciuntur,

Ubi Saturnus.

Sol assessor intuens polum purum.

Æthereusque cursus, & Lunæ ingens impetus,

Aeriique fluxus.

Solemque magnum, & splendidam Lunam.

TEMPUS



DEUM MUNDANUM, ÆTERNUM, INFINITUM.
 Juvenem, & senem——
 Et fontanum aliud, quod empyreum mundum
 ducit.

ANIMA CORPUS HOMO



PORTET TE FESTINARE AD LUCEM & PATRIS
 lumina,
 Unde missa est tibi anima, multam induta
 mentem.

Hæc pater mente concepit, mortalisque ei est animatus.
 Symbola enim paterna mens seminavit in animis
 Amore profundo replens animam.
 Reposuit enim mentem in anima, in corpore vero
 Vos reposuit pater hominumque deumque.
 Incorporea quidem sunt divina omnia.
 Corpora vero in ipsis vestri causa sunt alligata.
 Non potentes continere incorporeos corpora,
 Ob corpoream, in quam concentrati estis, naturam.
 Inque deo jacent faces trahentes validas.
 A patre descendentes, a quibus anima descendentibus
 Emphyreos carpit fructus, animam alentem florem.
 Ideoque mente concipientis opera patris
 Parcæ fatalis alam fugiunt inverecundam.
 Et si hanc animam videris redeuntem,
 At aliam imittit pater, ut in numero sit.
 Certe valde illæ sunt beatissimæ supra omnes

Animas, ad terram a Cœlo profusæ.
 Illæque divites, & ineffabilia stamina habentes.
 Quæcunque a lucente, o rex, a te, vel ipso
 Jove sunt progenitæ. Miti valida a necessitate
 Ducatur animæ profunditas immortalis oculosque affatim
 Omnes sursum extende.
 Nec deorsum pronus sis in nigricantem mandum.
 Cui profunditas semper infida substrata est, & Hades
 Circumquaque caligans, squalidus, idolis gaudens, Amens,
 Præcipitosus, tortuosus, cœcium profundum semper
 involvens,
 Semper desponsus obscuram faciem, inertem, Spiritu-
 carentem .
 Et Osor luminis mundus , & tortuosi fluxus
 A quibus vulgus attrahitur.
 Quære paradisum.
 Quære tu animæ canalem, unde, aut quo ordine
 Corpori inservieris, in ordinem a quo effluxisti
 Rursus restituas, sacro semoni operam uniens.
 Neque deorsum sis pronus, præcipitium in terra subest,
 Septemvios trahens per gradus: quo sub
 Horribile necessitatis Thronus est.
 Ne tu augeas fatum.
 Anima hominum Deum coget quodammodo in seipsam:
 Nihil mortale habens, tota a Deo est ebria facta
 Harmoniam resonat namque, sub qua est corpus mortale.
 Extendens igneam mentem ad opus pietatis,
 Et fluxile corpus servabis.
 Est & idolo portio in loco circumlucente.
 Undique inficta anima ignis habenas tende.
 Igne calens cogitatio primum habet ordinem.

Igni namque mortalis propinquans a Deo lumen
habetur.

Immoranti enim mortali præsto Dii aderunt.

Pœnæ hominum sunt angores.

Et malæ materiæ germina utilia sunt, & bona.

Spes nutriat te ignea Angelica in regione.

Sed non recipit illius velle Paterna mens,

Donec non exeat ex oblivione, & verbum loquatur.

Memoriam indens Paterni Synthematis puri.

His quidem discibile lucis dedit notitiam suscipere.

Hos vero & somnolentos sui fructum dedit roboris.

Ne spiritum macules neque profundum fac superficiem.

Neque materiæ quisquiliis præcipitio relinquantur.

Ne educas, ne exiens habeat quidpiam.

Vi corpus relinquentium animæ sunt purissimæ.

Animæ expulsores, respiratores, & faciles solutu sunt.

Sinistris in lumbis Hecates virtutis est fons,

Intus tota manens, virgineum non abjiciens.

O audacissimæ naturæ, homo, artificium!

Neque ingentes mensuras terræ in tuam mentem pone.

Non enim veritatis planta est in terra.

Neque in mensuris mensuras Solis regulas congregans,

Æterno consilio fertur, non gratia tui.

Lunarem quidem cursum, & astreum progressum.

Lunæ strepitum dimitte, semper currit opera necessitatis

Astreus progressus, tui gratia non est partus.

Æthereus avium pes latus nunquam verus est.

Non sacrificia visceraque cupio: hæc sunt omnia ludi,

Mercatoriæ deceptionis firmamenta; fuge tu hæc

Si vis pietatis sacrum paradisum aperire.

Ubi Virtus, sapientiaque, & bona lex congregantur.

Tuum enim vas bestię terræ habitabunt.
 Ipsas autem terra sepeliit ad filios usque.

DÆMONES SACRIFICIA



NATURA SUADET ESSE DÆMONAS PUROS.

Et mala materiæ germina, utilia, & bona.

Sed hæc in abditis septis mentis evolvo.

Ignis simulacrum saltatim in aere in tumorem
 extendens,

Vel etiam ignem infiguratum, unde vocem currentem,

Vel lumen abundans radians, streperum, convolutum:

Sed & equum videre luce magis fulgurantem,

Vel etiam puerum suis humeris inequantem equo,

Ignitum, vel auro diltinctum, vel spoliatum,

Vel etiam sagittantem, & stantem super humeris.

Multoties si dixeris mihi, cernes omnia leonem,

Neque enim cœlestis curvitas tunc apparet moles.

Astra non lucent, Lunæ lux opertum est,

Terra non stat, cernuntur vero cuncta fulminibus.

Neque naturæ voces per se visibile simulacrum,

Non enim oportet illos te spectare antequam corpus

Sacris purgetur.

Quando animas mulcentes semper a Sacris abducunt.

Ergo ex sinibus terræ exiliunt terrestres canes,

Nunquam verum corpus mortali homini monstrantes.

Operare circa Hecaticum turbinem.

Nomina barbara nunquam mutaveris.,

Sunt enim nomina apud singulos a Deo data.

Potentiam in Sacris ineffabilem habentia.

Quando videris forma sine Scarum ignem,
Collucentem saltatim totius per profundum mundi,
Audi ignis vocem.

COMMENTARY ON THE ORACLES BY
GEORGE GEMISTUS PLETHO

— *d.* 1464 AD

PLETHO'S EXPOSITION
OF THE MORE OBSCURE PASSAGES
IN THESE ORACLES



*seek thou the way of the soul, whence or by what order. 235
Having served the Body, to the same Order from which thou
didst flow.*

Thou maist rise up again; joining Action to sacred speech.



THE MAGI THAT ARE FOLLOWERS OF ZOROASTER, as also many others, hold that the human soul is immortal; and descended from above to serve the mortal body, *i. e.*, to operate therein for a certain time; and to animate and adorn it to her power; and then returns to the place from which she came. And whereas there are many Mansions there for the soul, one wholly bright, another wholly dark; others betwixt both partly bright, partly dark: The soul being descended from that which is wholly bright, into the body, if she perform her office well, runs back into the same place; but if not well, she retires into worse Mansions, according to the things which she has done in Life. The Oracle therefore says, "Seek thou the Soul's Path," or the way by which the soul floweth into thee; or by what course (*viz.*, of Life) having performed thy charge toward the body, thou may'st mount up to the same place from which thou didst flow down, *viz.*, the same track of the soul, "joining Action to Sacred Speech."

word, or conceive in her thoughts a certain speech, calling to remembrance the Paternal Divine Symbol or Watch-word; this is the pursuit of the good which the soul calling to remembrance hereby becomes most acceptable to her Maker.



It behoves thee to hasten to the Light, and to the Beams of the Father: 202
From whence there was sent to thee a soul endued with much Mind.

The Light and Splendor of the Father is that Mansion of the Soul which is circumlucid, from whence the Soul arrayed with much of the Mind was sent hither, wherefore we must hasten to return to the same Light.



These the Earth bewails, even to their own Children. 280

Those who hasten not to the Light, from which their Soul was sent to them, the Earth or mortal Nature bewails, for that they being sent hither to adorn her, not only not adorn her, but also blemish themselves by living wickedly; moreover the wickedness of the parents is transmitted to the children, corrupted by them through ill education .



The ungirders of the soul, which give her breathing, are easy to be loosed. 264

The Reasons which expell the Soul from wickedness, and give her breathing, are easy to be untied; and the oblivion which keeps them, is easily put off.



In the side of the sinister Bed there is a Fountain of virtue: 265 which remains entire within; not emmitting her virginity.

In the left side of thy bed, there is the Power or Fountain of Virtue, residing wholly within, and never casting off her Virginity, or Nature void of passion: for there is always in us the power of Virtue without passion which cannot be put off; although her Energy or Activity may be interrupted: he said the power of Virtue is placed on the left side, because her Activity is seated on the right. By the Bed is meant the Seat of the Soul, subject to her several Habits.



The soul of Man will, in a manner, clasp God to herself. 242 Having nothing mortal, she is wholly inebriated from God; For she boasts Harmony, in which the mortal Body consists.

“The Human Soul will in a manner clasp God,” and join him strictly “to herself,” (who is her continual defence) by resembling him as much as we can possibly;

“having nothing mortal” within her, “she is wholly drenched in Divinity,” or replenished with Divine goods; for though she is fettered to this mortal body, yet she “glories in the Harmony [or union] in which the mortal body exists;” that is, she is not ashamed of it, but thinks well of herself for it; as being a cause, and affording to the Universe, that, as Mortals are united with Immortals in Man, so the Universe is adorned with one Harmony.



*Because the soul being a bright fire by the power of the
Father, 133
remains immortal, and is Mistress of Life,
And possesseth many completions of the cavities of the world.*

The second God, who first before all other things proceeded from the Father and Supreme God, these Oracles call all along, “The Power of the Father,” and his “Intellectual Power,” and the “Paternal Mind.” He said therefore, that “the Soul procreated by this power of the Father, is a bright fire;” that is, a Divine and Intellectual Essence, and “presisteth immortal” through the Divinity of its Essence, “and is the Mistress of Life,” *viz.*, of herself, possessing Life which cannot be taken away from her, for, how can we be said to be masters of such things, as may be taken from us, seeing the use of them is only allowed us? but of those things which cannot be taken from us, we are absolute masters: The Soul according to her own eternity, “possesseth many Rooms in the Receptacles of the World,” or divers places in the World,

which according as she has led Life past is allotted to every one'.



seek paradise.

234

The circumlucid Mansion of the Soul.



Defile not the spirit, nor deepen a superficies.

260

The followers of Pythagoras and Plato conceive the Soul to be a Substance not wholly separate from all Body, nor wholly inseparate; but partly separate, partly inseparate; separable potentially, but ever separate actually. For they assert three kinds of Forms, one wholly separate from matter, the Supercelestial Intelligences; another wholly inseparate from matter, having a Substance not subsistent by itself but dependant on matter; together with which matter, which is sometimes dissolved by reason of its nature subject to mutation, this kind of Soul is diasolved also and perishes: this kind they hold to be wholly irrational. Betwixt these they place a middle kind, the rational Soul, differing from the Supercelestial Intelligences, for that it always co-exists with matter; and from the irrational kind, for that it is not dependant on matter; but, on the contrary, matter is dependant on it, and it has a proper substance potentially

subsistent by itself; it is also indivisible, as well as the Supercelestial Intelligences, and performing some works in some manner allayed to theirs, being itself also busied in the knowledge and contemplation of Beings even unto the Supreme God; and for this reason is incorruptible. This kind of Soul is always co-existent with an Æthereal Body as its 'Vehiculum,' which she by continual approximation makes also Immortal: neither is this her 'Vehiculum' inanimate in itself, but it is itself animated with the other species of the Soul, the irrational (which the wise call the Image of the rational Soul) adorned with Phantasie and Sense, which sees and hears itself whole through whole; and is furnished with all the Senses and with all the rest of the irrational Faculties of the Soul. Thus by the principal Faculty of this Body, Phantasie, the rational Soul is continually joined to such a Body, and by such a Body sometimes the human Soul is joined with a mortal Body by a certain affinity of Nature, the whole being infolded in the whole enlivening Spirit of the Embryon. This 'Vehiculum' itself being of the nature of a Spirit. The Dæmons Souls differ not much from the human, only they are more noble and use more noble Vehicles. Moreover, they cannot be mingled with corruptible Nature. Likewise the Souls of the Stars are much better than the Dæmons, and use better Vehicles; are Bodies splendid by reason of the greatness of the operative faculty: These Doctrines concerning the Soul the Magi, followers of Zoroaster, seem to have used long before. Defile not this kind of Spirit of the Soul, said the Oracle, nor deepen it being a superficies; he calls it superficies, not as if it had not a triple demention, for

it is a Body; but to signify its extraordinary rarity: nor make it become gross by accession of more matter to its Bulk: for this Spirit of the Soul becomes gross, if it declines too much towards the mortal Body.



There is a room for the Image also in the circumlucid place. 247

He calls the Image of the Soul that part which being itself void of irrational, is joined to the rational part, and depends upon the 'Vehicle' thereof: now he said that this kind of "Image hath a part in the circumlucid Region;" for the Soul never layeth down the 'Vehicle' adherent to her.



Leave not the dross of Matter on a precipice. 261

He calls the Mortal Body "the dross of Matter," and exhorts that we neglect it not being ill affected, but take care of it whilst it is in this life, to preserve it in health as much as possible, and that it may be pure, and in all things else correspond with the Soul.



Carry not forth, lest going forth she have something. 262

“Carry not forth,” meaning the Soul, out of the Mortal Body, “least by going forth” thou incur some danger, implying as much as to carry her forth beyond the Laws of Nature.



If thou extend the fiery Mind to the work of piety, thou shalt preserve the fluxible Body. 245

“Extending up thy Divine Mind to the Exercise of Piety” or to Religious Rites, and thou “shalt preserve the Mortal Body” more sound by performing these.



Certainly out of the Cavities of the Earth spring Terrestrial Dogs, 298
Which shew no true sign to Mortal Man.

Sometimes to many initiated persons there appear, whilst they are sacrificing, some apparitions in the shape of ‘Dogs,’ and several other figures. Now the Oracle says, that these “issue out of the Receptacles of the Earth;” that is, out of the terrestrial and mortal Body, and the irrational passions planted in it, which are not yet sufficiently adorned with Reason. These are apparitions of the passions of the Soul in performing Divine Rites: mere appearances having no substance, and therefore “not signifying anything true.”

Nature persuadeth that Dæmons are pure; 281
The bourgeons, even of ill matter, are profitable and good.

‘Nature’ or natural Reason “persuadeth that Dæmons are Sacred,” and that all things proceeding from God, who is in himself good, “are beneficial;” and the “very bloomings of ill Matter,” or the forms dependent upon Matter are such. He calls Matter ‘ill,’ not as to its substance, for how can the substance be bad, the bloomings whereof are beneficial and good ? but for that it is ranked last among the substances, and is the least participant of good, which littleness of good is here expressed by the word ill. Now the Oracle means, that if the bloomings of ill Matter, *viz.* of the last of substances are good, much more are the Dæmons such, who are in an excellent rank as partaking of rational Nature and being not mixed with mortal Nature.



The Furies are stranglers of Men. 252

‘The Furies’ or the vindictive Dæmons clasp Men close, or restrain and drive them from vice and excite them to virtue.



Let the immortal depth of the soul be predominant; but all thy
 Eyes 225
Extend quite upward.

Let the "divine depth of thy Soul" govern and lift
thou all thy Eyes or all thy knowing faculties 'upward.'



O Man, *the Machine of boldest Nature!*

267

He calls Man the "Machine of boldest Nature-!" because he attempts great things.



*If thou speak often to me, thou shalt see absolutely that which
is spoken:* 291

*For there neither appears the celestial conclave bulk
Nor to the stars shine: the light of the Moon is covered,
The Earth stands not still, but all things appear Thunder.*

The Oracle speaks as from God to an initiated person, "If thou often speak to me," or call me, "thou shalt see that which thou speakest," viz. Me whom thou callest everywhere: for then thou shalt perceive nothing but 'Thunder' all about, fire gliding up and down all over the World.



Call not on the self-conspicuous Image of Nature.

295

Seek not to behold the self-seeing 'Image of Nature,' viz., of the Nature of God, which is not visible to our

eyes: but those things which appear to the initiated persons, as Thunder, Lightning, and all else whatsoever, are only symbols or signs, not the Nature of God.



*Every way to the unfashioned soul stretch out the reins of
Fire.* 248

Draw unto thyself every way the 'Reins of Fire,' which appear to thee when thou art sacrificing, with a sincere Soul; *viz.*, a simple, and not of various habits.



*When thou seest a sacred Fire, without Form,
shining flashingly through the depth of the world,
Hear the voice of Fire.* 304

When thou beholdest the divine fire void of figure brightly gliding up and down the World and graciously smiling, listen to this voice as bringing a most perfect præscience.



The Paternal mind hath implanted symbols in souls. 205

The Paternal Mind, *viz.*, the Sedulous Maker of the substance of the Soul, "hath ingrafted Symbols" or the

Images of the Intelligibles in Souls, by which every Soul possesses in herself the reasons of Beings.



Learn the Intelligible, for as much it exists beyond the Mind. 47

“Learn the Intelligible, because it exists beyond thy Mind,” viz., actually; for, though the Images of Intellectual things are planted in thee by the Maker of All; yet they are but potentially in thy Soul; but it behoves thee to have actually the knowledge of the Intelligible.



There's a certain Intelligible which it behoves thee to comprehend with the flower of thy Mind. 52

The Supreme God, who is perfectly One, is not conceived after the same manner as other things, but “by the flower of the Mind,” that is, the supreme and singular part of our understanding.



For the Father perfected all things and delivered them over to the second Mind, which Nations of Men call the First. 24

“The Father perfected all things,” viz., the Intelligible Species, (for they are absolute and perfect) “and delivered

them over to the second God," next him to rule and guide them: whence, if any thing be brought forth by this God, and formed after the likeness of him, and the other Intelligible Substance, it proceeds from the Supreme Father; this other God, "Men esteem the First," that is, they who think him the Maker of the World, to whom there is none Superiour.



*Intelligent Iynges do themselves also understand from the
Father;* 105
By unspeakable Counsels being moved so as to understand

He calls 'Iynges' the Intellectual Species which are conceived by the Father; they themselves also being conceptive, and exciting conceptions or notions, by unspeakable or unutterable counsels: by 'Motion' here is understood intellection, not transition, but simply the habitude to notions so as unspeakable counsels is as much as unmoved, for speaking consists in 'Motion;' the meaning is this, that these Species are immoveable and have a habitude to notions not transiently as the Soul.



Oh how the world hath Intellectual Guides inflexible. 114

The most excellent of the Intelligible Species, and of those which are brought down by the Immortals in this Heaven, he calls the 'Intellectual Guides of the World;'

the Coryphæus whom he conceives to be a God, which is the second from the Father. The Oracle saying that 'the World hath inflexible Guides,' means that it is incorruptible.



The Father hath snatched away himself; 23
Neither hath he shut up his own Fire in his Intellectual Power.

The Father has made himself exempt from all others; not including himself either in his own Intellectual Power, or in the second God who is next him; or limiting his own Fire, his own Divinity; for it is absolutely ungenerate, and itself existing by itself; so that his Divinity is exempt from all others; neither is it communicable to any other, although it be loved of all. That he communicates not himself, is not out of envy, but only by reason of the impossibility of the thing.



The Father infuseth not Fear but persuasion.

The Father makes no impression of fear, but infuses persuasion or love; for he being extremely good, is not the cause of ill to any, so as to be dreadful; but is the cause of good to all; whence he is loved of all.



THESE ORACLES OF ZOROASTER MANY EMINENT PERSONS
have confirmed by following the like opinions;
especially the Pythagoreans and Platonists.



COMMENTARY ON THE ORACLES BY
MICHÆL CONSTANTINE PSELLUS

1018 — *c.* 1079 AD

PSELLUS' EXPOSITION OF
THE ORACLES



There is a room for the image also in the circumlucid place 247



IMAGES WITH THE PHILOSOPHERS, ARE THOSE things which are connatural to things more excellent than themselves, and are worse than they; as the Mind is connatural to God, and the Rational Soul to the Mind, and Nature to the Rational Soul, and the Body to Nature, and Matter to the Body. The Image of God is the Mind; of the Mind, the Rational Soul; of the Rational Soul, the Irrational; of the Irrational Soul, Nature; of Nature, the Body; of the Body, Matter. Here the *chaldæan oracle* calls the Irrational Soul the Image of the Rational, for it is connatural to it in Man, and yet worse than it. It says, moreover, that there is a part assigned to the Image in the circumlucid region, that is to say, the Irrational Soul, which is the Image of the Rational Soul, being purified by virtues in this life, after the dissolution of the human life, ascends to the place above the Moon, and receives its lot in the circumlucid place, that is, which shineth on every side, and is splendid throughout; for the place beneath the Moon is circumnebulous, that is, dark on every side. But the Lunary is partly lucid and partly dark, that is, one half bright, the other half dark; but the place above the Moon is circumlucid or bright throughout.

Now the Oracle says, that the circumlucid place, is not designed only for the Rational Soul, but for its Image also, or the Irrational Soul is destined to the circumlucid place, when as it cometh out of the Body bright and pure, for the Græcian Doctrine asserting the Irrational Soul to be Immortal, also exalts it up to the elements under the Moon; but the *Chaldæan oracle*, it being pure and unanimous with the Rational Soul, seats it in the circumlucid region above the Moon. ❧ These are the Doctrines of the Chaldæans.



Leave not the Dregs of Matter on a Precipice.

261

By the dregs of Matter the Oracle understands the body of man consisting of the four elements, it speaks to the disciple by way of instruction and exhortation, thus: not only raise up thy Soul to God, and procure that it may rise above the confusion of life; but, if it be possible, leave not the Body wherewith thou are clothed, (and which is 'dregs of Matter,' that is, a thing neglected and rejected, the sport of Matter) in the inferior World: for this place, the Oracle calls a 'Precipice.' Our Soul being darted down hither from Heaven, as from a sublime place. It exhorts therefore, that we refine the Body (which he understands by the 'dregs of Matter') by divine, or that, being stripped, we raise it up to the Æther; or that we be exalted by God to a place immaterial and incorporeal, or corporeal but æthereal or cœlestial, which Elias the Tisbite attained; and before him Enoch, being

translated from this life into a more Divine condition, not leaving the 'dregs of Matter', or their bodies in a Precipice; the 'Precipice' is, as we said the Terrestrial Region.



bring [her] not forth, least going forth she have something. 262

This Oracle is recited by Plotinus in his book of the Education of the Irrational Soul; it is an excellent and transcendent exhortation. It advises, that a man busy not himself about the going forth of the Soul, nor take care how it shall go out of the Body; but remit the business of its dissolution to the course of Nature; for, anxiety and solicitude about the solution of the Body, and the education of the Soul out of it, draws away the Soul from better cogitations, and busy it in such cares that the Soul cannot be perfectly purified; for if death come upon us at such time as we are busied about this dissolution, the Soul goes forth not quite free, but retaining something of a passionate life. Passion the Chaldæans defines, a man's sollicitous thinking of death; for we ought not to think of anything, but of the more excellent illuminations; neither concerning these ought we to be sollicitous: but resigning ourselves to the Angelic and Divine Powers, which raise us up and shutting up all the organs of sense in the Body and in the Soul also without distractive cares and sollicitudes, we must follow God who calls us.

E

Some interpret this Oracle more simply: "Bring it not out least it go forth, having something;" that is, anticipate not thy natural death, although thou be wholly given up to Philosophy; for as yet thou has not a complete expiation; so that if the Soul pass out of the Body by the way of educting, it will go forth retaining something of mortal life: for if we Men are in the Body, as in a prison (as Plato says) certainly no man can kill himself, but must expect 'till God shall send a necessity.



*subject not thy Mind to the vast measures of the Earth; 268
For the Plant of Truth is not upon the Earth.*

*Nor measure the Measures of the Sun, gathering together Canons:
He is moved by the Eternal will of the Father, not for thy sake.
Let alone the swift course of the Moon: she runs ever by the
impulse of Necessity.*

*The Progression of the stars was not brought forth for thy sake.
The Ætherial broad footed flight of Birds is not voracious.*

*And the Dissections of Entrails and victims, all these are Toys.
The supports of gainful Cheats. Fly thou those,
If thou intend to open the sacred Paradise of Piety.
Where virtue, wisdom, and Equity are assembled.*

The Chaldæan withdraws the disciple from all Græc-ian Wisdom, and teaches him to adhere only to God, "Subject not to thy Mind the vast measures of the Earth; for the Plant of Truth is not on the Earth;" that is, enquire not sollicitously into the vast measures of the Earth, as Geographers use to do, measuring the Earth;

for the seed of Truth is not in the Earth. Nor “measure the measures of the Sun, gathering together Canons; he is moved by the Eternal Will of the Father, not for thy sake:” that is, busy not thyself about the motion and doctrine of the Stars, for they move not for thy sake, but are perpetually moved according to the Will of God; “Let alone the swift course of the Moon, she runs ever by the impulse of Necessity:” that is, enquire not anxiously the rolling motion of the Moon, for she runs not for thy sake, but is impelled by a greater necessity. “The Progression of the Stars was not brought forth for thy sake;” that is, the leaders of the Fixed Stars and the Planets received not their essence for thy sake. “The Æthereal broad-footed flight of Birds is not veracious;” that is, the Art concerning birds flying in the Air, called Augury, observing their flight, notes, and pearching, is not true. By “broad feet” he means the walking or pace of the foot, in respect of the extention of the toes in the skin. “And the Dissections of Entrails and Victims, all these are Toys:” that is, the Art of Sacrificing, which enquireth after future events, as well by Victims, as by inspection into the Entrails of sacrificed beasts, are mere Toys. “The supports of gainful Cheats: fly thou those,” that is, fraudulent acquisitions of gain. “If thou intend to open the Sacred Paradise of Piety, where Virtue, Wisdom, and Equity are assembled.” Thou (said he) who art under my discipline, enquire not curiously after these things, if thou wouldst that the Sacred Paradise of Piety be opened to thee. The Sacred Paradise of Piety, according to the Chaldæans, is not that which the book

EE

of Moses describes, but the Meadow of sublimest contemplations, in which there are several Trees of Virtues; and the Wood, (or Trunk) of knowledge, of good and evil, that is, Dijudicative Prudence which distinguishes good from evil; likewise, the Tree of Life, that is, the Plant of Divine Illumination, which brings forth to the Soul the fruit of a more holy and better life; in this Paradise, therefore, grow Virtue, Wisdom, and Equity; Virtue is one in general, but has many Species; Wisdom comprehends within itself all the Virtues, which the Divine Mind pronounces, as only unspeakable.



seek thou the way of the soul, whence or by what order 235
Having served the Body, to the same order from which thou
didst flow,
Thou mayst rise up again; joining Action to sacred speech.

That is, "Seek the Origin of the Soul," from whence it was produced and served the Body, and how Men cherishing and raising it up by the exercise of Divine Rites, may reduce it to the place whence it came. "Uniting Action to Sacred Reason," is to be understood thus: 'Sacred Reason,' or discourse in us is the Intellectual Life, or rather the supreme faculty of the Soul, which the Oracle elsewhere styles the Flower of the Mind; but this Sacred Reason cannot by its own guidance aspire to the more sublime Institution, and to the comprehension of Divinity; the work of piety leads it by the hand to God, by assistance of Illuminations from thence: but

the Chaldæan by the 'Telestick Science,' perfects (or initiates), the Soul by the power of materials here on Earth. To this Sacred Reason, when thou hast united Action, that is, joined the work of Initiation to the Sacred Reason, or better faculty of the Soul.

Our Theologist Gregory raised the Soul to the more Divine things by Reason and comtemplation: by Reason which is in us the best and most intellectual faculty; by contemplation, which is an illumination coming from above: But Plato affirms, that we may comprehend the ungenerate essence by reason and intellect. But the Chaldæan says, that there is no other means for us to arrive at God, but by strengthening the 'Vehiculum' of the Soul by Material Rites; for it supposes that the Soul is purified by Stones and Herbs, and Charms, and is rendered expedite for Ascent.



stoop not down; for a precipice lies below on the Earth. 238
Drawing through the Ladder which hath seven steps, beneath
which
is the Throne of Necessity.

The Oracle advises, the Soul which is next to God, that she adhere only to him with her whole mind, and bend not downwards; for there is a great 'Precipice' betwixt God and the Earth which draws Souls down the 'Ladder' which has seven steps: The Ladder of seven steps signifies the Orbs of the seven Planets; if therefore the Soul decline, she is carried to the Earth through the

seven Orbs: but the passage through the seven circles leads her as by so many steps to the 'Throne of Necessity,' whither, when the Soul arrives, she is necessitated to suffer the terrestrial World.



Never change barbarous Names.

301

That is, there are certain Names among all Nations delivered to them by God, which have an unspeakable power in Divine Rites: change not these into the Greek dialect; as 'Seraphim' and 'Cherubin,' and 'Michæl' and 'Gabriel:' these in the Hebrew dialect have an unspeakable efficacy in Divine Rites; but changed into Greek names, are ineffectual.



The world hath intellectual Guides inflexible.

114

The Chaldæans assert 'Powers' in the World, and call them 'Cosmogogi' [or] 'Guides of the World,' for that they guide the World by provident motions: These powers the Oracle calls 'Sustainers,' as sustaining the whole World. Unmoveable implies their seteled power; suste-entive, their guardian-ship; these powers they design only by the cause and immobility of the Worlds: There are also other 'Powers' (Amilicti) implacable, as being firm and not to be converted towards these inferior

things, and cause that Souls be never allured with affections.



Labour about the Hecatine strophalus.

300

The 'Hecatine Strophalus' is a golden ball, in the midst whereof is a sapphire; they fold about it a leather-thong; it is beset all over with characters: thus whipping it about they made their invocations: these they use to call Iynges, whether it be round or triangulat, or any othre figure; and whilst they are doing thus, they make insignificant or brutish cries, and lash the Air with their whips. The Oracle advises to the performance of these Rites or such a motion of the 'Strophalus,' as having an expressible power. It is called 'Hecatine,' as being dedicated to Hecate: Hecate is a Goddess among the Chaldæans, having at her right side the Fountain of Virtues.



If thou speak often to me, thou shalt see absolutely that which is spoken.

291

For then neither appears the Cælestial Concave Bulk, nor do the Stars shine,; the light of the Moon is covered, The Earth stands not still, but all things appear Thunder.

The Lion is one of the twelve Signs of the Zodiak, and is called the House of the Sun, whose Fountain or the cause of his Lion-formed Constellation the Chaldæans

calls *leontochon*: now he said, that admidst the Sacred Rites thou call this Fountain by its Name, thou shalt see nothing else in Heaven but the apparition of a Lion, neither will the 'Concave Bulk,' or the circumference of Heaven appear to thee, neither shall the Stars shine, even the Moon herself shall be covered, and all things shall be shaken; but this Lion-having Fountain takes not away the essence of those, but their own predominating existence hides their view.



Every way to the unfashioned soul, extend the Reins of Fire. 248

The Oracle calls the Soul *aplason*, that is, without form and figure, or most simple, and most pure. Reins of Fire of such a Soul are the expeditious activity of the Theurgick Life, which raises up the Fiery Mind to the Divine Light: therefore by stretching the Reins of Fire to the inform Soul, he means: endeavour that all the faculties consisting both in the Intellect, Cognition, and Opinion, may receive Divine Illuminations suitable to themselves. This is the meaning of 'stretch the Reins of Fire;' but Nature useth to fail, and busy itself in the second or worse Life.



Oh Man, the machine of boldest Nature!

Man is called a Machine as being framed by God with unspeakable Art: the Oracle likewise calls him audacious Nature, as being busied about excellent things, sometimes measuring the course of the Stars, sometimes enquiring into the Orders of the supernatural Powers; contemplating also the things which are far above the Cœlestial Orb, and extending to discourse something of God. For these endeavours of the Mind in disquisition proceed from an audacious Nature: he calls it boldness, not by way of reproach, but to express the forwardness of Nature.



In the side sinister of Hecate is a Fountain of much virtue; which remains entire within, not emitting her virginity. 265

The Chaldæans esteem Hecate a Goddess, seated in the middle rank, and possessing as it were the centre of all the Powers; in her right parts they place the Fountain of Souls, in her left, the Fountain of Goods, or of Virtues; and they say, that the Fountain of Souls is prompt to propagations, but the Fountain of Virtues continues within the bounds of its own essence, and is as a Virgin incorrupted: this settledness and immobility it receives from the power of the 'Amilicti,' the Implacables, is girt with a Virgin Zone.



When thou seest a sacred Fire without Form 304
shining flashingly through the depths of the whole world,
Hear the voice of Fire.

The Oracle speaks of Divine Light, seen by many men, and advises, that if anyone see such a Light in some figure and form, he apply not his mind to it, nor esteem the voice proceeding from thence to be true; but if he see this without any figure or form he shall not be deceived: and whatsoever question he shall propose, the answer will be most true, he calls this *euieron* 'Sacrosanct,' for that it is seen with a beauty by sacred persons, and glides up and down pleasantly and graciously through the Depths of the World.



Invoke not the self-conspicuous image of Nature. 295

Autopsia, Self-inspection, is, when the initiated person or he who performs Divine Rites sees the Divine Lights: but if he who orders the Rites sees an apparition, this, in respect of the initiated person is super-inspection. The Image which is evocated at Sacred Rites, must be Intelligible and wholly separate from Bodies. But the Form or Image of Nature is not every way Intelligible: for Nature is for the most part an administrative faculty. Call not, said he, in the Rites the self-conspicuous Image of Nature; for it will bring thee nothing along with it but only a crowd of the four Natural Elements.

Nature persuades that Dæmons are pure. 281
The bourgeons even of ill matter are profitable and good.

Not that Nature herself persuades this, but that being called before her presence there floweth in a great company of Dæmons and many Dæmonious forms of several shapes appear raised up out of all the Elements, compounded and shaped from all the parts of the Lunar course, and many times appearing pleasant and gracious, they make show of an apparition of some good to the initiated person.



The soul of man will in a manner clasp God to herself. 242
Having nothing mortal she is wholly inebriated from God.
For she boasts Harmony, in which the mortal body exists.

He said that the Soul 'forceth,' the Divine Fire into herself, through Immortality and Purity, for then she is 'wholly inebriated,' that is, she is replenished with the most excellent Life and Illumination, and exists as it were out of herself: the Oracle said to her, 'boast of Harmony;' that is, glory in the obscure and unintelligible Harmony by which thou art tied together in Arithmetical and Musical Proportions: for under this unintelligible Harmony even the Mortal and compounded Body is composed, having its compositions derived from thence.



*Let the immortal depth of the soul be predominant, but all
thy Eyes* 225
Extend upward.

The 'depth of the Soul' is her three-fold powers; the intellectual, the intelligent, and the opinionative. Her Eyes are the three-fold cognoscitive operations of these; for the Eye is the symbol of Knowledge, as Life is of Appetite. Open therefore, said he, the immortal depth of the Soul, and extend thy cognoscitive Powers upwards, and even thy own self (to use our own expression) transfer to the Lord.



Defile not the spirit, nor deepen a superficialities. 260

The Chaldaëans cloathe the Soul with two 'Garments:' one they call Spiritual, woven for it by the sensible World and the other Luci-form, tenuious and intangible, which is here termed 'Superficies:' Defile not, said he, the Spiritual garment of thy Soul with impurity; neither cause its 'Superficies' to grow deep by certain material additions: but preserve both in their own Natures, one pure, the other undipt.



seek paradise.

234

The Chaldæan Paradise is the whole Chorus of Divine Powers about the Father, and the Fiery Beauties of the creative Fountains. The opening thereof by piety is the participation of the Goods; the flaming Sword is the implacable Power which withstands those that approach it unworthily; to such persons it is shut, for they are not capable of its felicity. To the pious it is open. To this place tend all the Theurgick Virtues.



This vessel the Beasts of the Earth shall inhabit. 279

The 'Vessel' is the compound mixture of the Soul, the Beasts of the Earth are the Dæmons which rove about the Earth: our life therefore being full of passions shall be inhabited by such Beasts: for such kinds are essentiated in passions, and have a material seat and order. Wherefore such as are addicted to passions are glued to them by assimilation, for they attract what is like them, having a motive faculty from the passions.



If thou extend the fiery Mind to the work of piety, thou shalt preserve the fluxible Body. 245

That is, "If thou extend thy illuminated Mind" upwards, and the work of fire to the works of Piety, (the works of Piety, with the Chaldæans, are the methods of Rites), thou shalt not only render the Soul unvanquish-

able by passions, but shalt also preserve thy Body the more healthful; for this ordinarily is the effect of Divine Illuminations, *viz.*, to consume the Matter of the Body, and to establish Health, that it be not seized either by passion or diseases.



*Certainly out of the Cavities of the Earth spring terrestrial
Dogs,* 298
which shew no true sign to mortal man.

The speech is of material Dæmons: these he calls Dogs, for that they are executioners of Souls; Terrestrial, for that they fall from Heaven, and are rolled about the Earth. These, said he, being removed far from the Beatitude of Divine Life, and destitute of Intellectual contemplation, cannot pre-signify futures; whence all that they say or show is false, and not solid: for they know Beings *morphotikos*, by their outsides; but, that which knoweth figures *merikos*, particularly, uses notions indivisible and not figured.



*For the Father perfected all things, and deliver'd them over
to the second* 24
Mind, which all Nations of Men call the first.

The first Father of the Triad, having made the Universal Frame, delivered it over to the Mind; which Mind

the whole Race of Mankind (being ignorant of the paternal excellency) call the first God: but our Doctrine holds the contrary, *viz.*, that the first Mind, the Son of the Great Father, made and perfected every creature; for the Father, in the book of Moses, declared to the Son the Idæa of the production of Creatures, but the Son himself is the Maker of the Work.



The Furies or stranglers of Men.

252

Anagogoi aggeloi The reductive Angels reduce Souls to them, drawing them from general things; but the Furies being the tormentors of the Natures which are dispersed, and envious of human Souls, entangle them in material passions; and as it were strangle them: and not only torture such as are full of passions, but even those that are converted towards the immaterial essence, for these also coming into Matter and into Generation, stand in need of such purification; for we see many persons even of those who live holy and purely, fall into unexpected miseries.



The paternal Mind hath implanted symbols in souls.

205

As the Mosaic book says, that Man was formed after the Image of God; so the Chaldæan says, that the Maker and Father of the World sowed symbols of his essence in

the Souls thereof. For out of the paternal Seed, not only Souls, but all superior Orders sprung. But in Incorporeal substances there is one kind of signs, *viz.*, incorporeal, and individual; in the World, there are other Signs and Symbols, the unspeakable properties of God, which are far more excellent than the Virtues themselves.



The souls of those who quit the Body violently are most pure.

263

Whosoever shall take this saying rightly will find that it contradicts not our Doctrine; for the crowned martyrs who in time of persecution leave their Bodies by a violent end, purify and perfect their Souls: but this is not that which the Chaldæan means. He praises all violent death, because the Soul, which leaves the Body with trouble, abhors this life, and hates conversation with the Body, and, rejoicing, flies up to the things above; but those Souls which forsake this life, their Bodies being naturally dissolved by sickness, do regret its propension and inclination to the Body.



Because the soul being a bright Fire, by the power of the Father

133

*Remains immortal, and is Mistress of Life,
And possesseth many Completions of the Cavities of the world.*

The Soul being an immaterial and incorporeal Fire, exempt from all compounds, and from the material Body is immortal; for nothing material or dark is commixed with her, neither is she compounded, so as that she may be resolved into those things of which she consists; but she is the Mistress of Life, enlightning the Dead with Life; she hath the Complements of many Recesses, that is, susceptible of the Government of Matter, for she is enabled according to her different Virtues to dwell in different Zones of the World.



The Father infuseth not fear, but instead persuasion.

That is, the Divine Nature is not stern and full of Indignation, but sweet and calm; whence it doth not cause Fear in the Natures subjected to it, but attracts all things by persuasion and graciousness; for if it were formidable and minacious, every Order of Beings would have been dissolved; none of them being able to endure his Power. And this Doctrine, is in part esteemed true amongst us, for God is a Light, and a Fire consuming the wicked. The menaces and affrightings of God are the intermission of the Divine Goodness towards us, by reason of our ill management of our affairs.



The Father hath snatched away himself: 23
Neither hath he shut up his own fire in his intellectual fire.

The meaning of which Oracle is this: The God of all things, who is also termed Father, hath made himself incomprehensible, not only to the first and second Natures, and to our Souls, but even to his own Power; for the Father, says he, has snatched himself away from every Nature. But this Doctrine is not Orthodox; for with us the Father is known in the Son, as the Son in the Father, and the Son is the definition of the Father, and the Divine supernatural World.



For the intelligible is something, which it behoves thee to comprehend with the flower of thy mind. 52

The Soul hath a power correspondent to every thing that is conceivable by the Mind: as to sensibles, Sense; to cogitables, Cognition; to intelligibles, Mind. Now the Chaldæan says, that although God is an Intelligible, yet he is not comprehensible by the Mind, but only by the 'Flower of the Mind.' The Flower of the Mind is the (*eniaia*) singular power of the Soul: since therefore, God is properly one, endeavour not to comprehend him by the Mind, but by the singular power: for that which is first one, can only be apprehended by that which is one in us, and not either by cognition or Mind.



The ungirders of the soul which give her breathing are easy to be loosed. 264

Least any one should say: "I would free my Soul from my Body, but I cannot;" the Oracle tells us, that the Powers, which thrust the Soul out of the natural Body, and give her breathing, as it were, from the toil and trouble of the Body, are easily loosed; that is, these faculties are free and not restrained by any Nature, and able to set the Body at liberty generously from corporeal Bonds.



It behooves thee to hasten to the Light, and to the Beams of the Father, 202
From whence was sent to thee a soul cloathed with much Mind.

Seeing that the Soul hath not its Being from Seed, neither consists of corporeal mixtures but had its essence from God above; therefore she ought to turn towards him, and to make her return to the Divine Light: for she came down cloathed with much Mind: that is, she was furnished by the Maker and Fathre, with many remembrances of Divine sayings, when she came hither, whence she should endeavour to return by the same remembrances.



All things are produced out of one Fire.

This is a true Doctrine, conformable to our Religion; for all Beings, as well intelligible as sensible, received their essence from God above, and are converted to God alone; those which have Being only essentially; those which have Being and Life, essentially and vitally; those which have Being and Life and Mind, essentially and vitally and Intellectually. From One therefore all things came, and to One is their return: this Oracle is not to be condemned, but is full of our Doctrine.



What the mind speaks, it speaks by intellection.

80

When thou shalt hear an articulate voice, thundering from above out of Heaven, think not that the Angel or God who sends forth that voice, did articulate it after our manner enunciatively; but that he, according to his own Nature, conceived it only inarticulately: but thou, according to thy own impotence, hearest the notion syllabically and enuntiatively. For as God heareth our voice not vocally, so Man receiveth the notions of God vocally, every one according to the operation of his Nature.



These the Earth bewails, even to their Children.

280

It is meant of Atheists, that God extends his vengeance even to their posterity: for the Oracle, to express the torments which they shall receive under the Earth, says, "It howls beneath for them:" that is, the place under the Earth bellows to them, and roareth like a Lion. Whence Proclus also said: The composition of Souls that are of affinity with one another, is of like Nature; and those which are not yet loosed from the bands of Nature, are entangled and detained by like passions. These therefore must fulfill all punishments, and since by natural affinity they are infected with pollutions, must again be cleansed from them.



Enlarge not thy Destiny,

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The wisest of the Greeks call Nature or rather the completion of the illuminations which the Nature of Beings receiveth: Fate. Providence is an immediate beneficence from God. But Fate is that which governs all our affairs, by the concatenation of Beings. We are subjects to Providence, when we act Intellectually; to Fate, when Corporeally. Encrease not therefore thy Fate, nor endeavour to surmount it, but commit thy self wholly to the government of God.



For nothing proceeds from the paternal principality imperfect.

The Father produceth all things perfect and self-sufficient according to their Order, but the imbecillity and remission of the things produced sometimes causeth a defect and imperfection, but the Father calleth back again that defect to perfection; and converts it to its self-sufficiency. Like this, is that which James the brother of our Lord pronounceth in the beginning of his Epistle, "Every perfect Gift cometh down from above, from the Father of Lights." For nothing proceeds imperfect from the perfect, and especially when we chance to be ready to receive that which is primarily distilled from him.



But the Paternal Mind accepts not her until she come forth. 255

The Paternal Mind doth not admit the impulsions of the desires of the Soul, before she hath excluded the forgetfulness of the riches which she received from the most bountiful Father, and called back to her memory the Sacred Watch-words which she received from him, and pronounce the good speech imparting in her remembrance the Symbols of the Father who begot her. For the Soul consists of Sacred Words and Divine Symbols, of which those proceed from the Sacred Species, these from the Divine Monads; and we are (*eikones*) Images of the Sacred essences, but (*agalmata*) Statues of the unknown Symbols. Moreover we must know that every Soul differs from another Soul specifically, and that there are several Species of Souls as there are Souls.

When thou seest the Terrestrial Dæmon approach, sacrifice the stone Mnizuris, using Invocation.

The Dæmons that are near the Earth are by Nature lying, as being far off from the Divine Knowledge, and filled with dark Matter. Now if you would have any true discourse from these, prepare an Altar, and "sacrifice the Stone Mnisuris:" this Stone hath the power of evocating the other greater Dæmon, who, invisibly approaching to the material Dæmon, will pronounce the true solution of demands, which he transmits to the demandant. The Oracle joineth the evocative Name with the sacrificing of the Stone. The Chaldæans assert some Dæmons good, others ill; but our Religion defines them all to be ill, as having by a premeditated defection exchanged good for ill.



Learn the intelligible, for asmuch as it exists beyond the Mind. 47

For though all things are comprehended by the Mind, yet God the first Intelligible exists 'without' or 'beyond the Mind,' This 'without' you must not understand distantly, nor according to intellectual alternity, but according to the intelligible excess alone, and the propriety of the existence, it being without, or beyond all Mind, whereby the superessential is manifested. For the first intelligible Mind is Essence, beyond which is the Self-intelligible. Besides these is God, who is beyond the

Intelligible, and Self-intelligible: for we assert the Divinity to be neither intelligible nor self-intelligible, it being more excellent than all Speech and Notion, so as that it is wholly unintelligible, and unexpressible, and more to be honoured by silence, than revered by wonderful expressions. For it is more sublime than to be revered, spoken, and conceived.



*Intelligent Iynges do themselves also understand from
the Father,* 105
By unspeakable Counsels being moved so as to understand.

'Iynges' are certain (Virtues or) Powers, next the Paternal Depth, consisting of three Triads. These understand according to the Paternal Mind, which containeth their cause solely in himself. Now the counsels of the Father in regard of their intelligible sublimity, are not vocal; but the intellectual marks of abstract things, though understood by secondaries (or inferiors) are understood as without speaking, and as it were abstracted from intelligible prolations. For as the conceptions of Souls, they understand Intellectual Orders, yet understand them as immutable: so the acts of the Intellectuals understanding the Intellectual Signs, understand them as not a vocal subsisting in unknown Existences.

COMMENTARY ON THE ORACLES BY
PROCLUS [DIADOCHUS]

410—485 AD

PROCLUS' EXPOSITION OF THE ORACLES*



THE ÆTERNAL ORDERS ARE THE TEMPLES AND habitations of the Gods, and the paternal order is the all-receptive temple of the Father which receives and unites ascending souls. The angelic order in a characteristic way leads souls upwards to the cœlestial region, 'appearing about the soul,' according to the Oracle, *i. e.*, illuminating it thoroughly, and causing it to be full of undefiled fire, which imparts to it an immutable and tranquil order and power, but is united with the light of divine things: this, further, retains it in its native place, and causes it to be unmixed with matter, elevating the spirit by heat and raising it on high by means of the anagogic life. For the heating of the spirit is the imparting of life. But it is wholly elevated by hastening into the cœlestial region, just as by gravitating downward it is carried into matter or the region of generation. But the end of ascents is the participation of divine fruits and the filling the soul with divine fire, which is the contemplation of God, the soul being placed in the presence of the Father. The soul celebrating divine things is perfected, according to the Oracle, placing before and carrying to the Father the ineffable symbols of the Father, which the Father placed in the soul in the

*translated by Thomas Johnson; appended to *Iamblichus Exhortation to the Study of Philosophy*; Osceola, Missouri, 1907.

first progression of essence. For such are the intellectual and invisible hymns of the ascending soul, awakening the memory of harmonic reasons, which bear the inexpressible images in it of the divine powers.



The Oracle says that the depth of the soul is its triple-gnostic powers, *viz.*, noetic, dianoetic, and doxastic, but all the eyes are its triple gnostic energies. For the eye is the symbol of knowledge, but life of desire: and each of these is triple. But the earth, from which it is necessary that the heart be raised, signifies all material and mutable things in generation, *i. e.*, the terrestrial life, and every corporeal form. To which follows, the Oracle adds, the contemplation of the paternal monad, the pure joy in reference to this contemplation, and a steady tranquility from this noetic survey. From these it is evident that the good of this contemplation is mixed from the apprehension and the joy which naturally accompanies it. For every life having an energy which is by its nature easily and quickly liberated is allotted a connate pleasure. The hymn of the Father does not consist of compound discourses nor the preparation of sacred rites. For being alone incorruptible he does not receive a corruptible hymn. Let us not therefore imagine that we may persuade the Master of true discourses by a strange hurricane of words, nor by show or parade adorned with artificial rites: for God loves the simple, unadorned beauty of form. Let us therefore consecrate this hymn to God, *viz.*, an assimilation to or becoming like him: let us leave

the earthly sphere, which is of a transient nature: let us come to the true end: let us know the Master: let us love the Father: let us obey the one calling: let us run to the hot, flying from the cold. Let us become fire: let us travel through fire. We have a quick and easy way to the ascent to the Father. The Father will guide, pointing out the ways of fire: let us not flow with the humble stream of Lethe, the river of oblivion.



The body is the root of evil, just as the Intellect is the root of Virtue. For Virtue blossoms for souls in the celestial region, but evil comes to souls from the worse, in the region of matter. The casting into the material region the evil which is eliminated from our nature, will enable the soul to go wherever it may aspire. It is now temporarily allotted to the whole of generation or the material nature, since evils are here and of necessity revolve in and around this place. And our body is a part of generation or the sphere of time and sense, but another part, *viz.*, the soul, is able to act unsubdued by the power of generation, but cannot conquer the whole of generation, unless we destroy the being or essence of it. Into the material sphere, therefore, we must cast jealousy and envy, whence the soul drew them. For material things have matter as a nurse. And 'the not extinguishing' or restraining the tendency of the mind to the worse does not refer to a mere temporary disappearance of it, just as all the passions which are restrained in a certain being are contained in it and fill it with their own heat.

But instead of restraining cast it out, not keeping within that which is only dammed up. On account of which the Oracle adds: Do not refile the spirit through that which is within and hidden. But envy is material: for it dwells with the privation of goods. And privation co-exists with unproductive matter. But the theurgic race is beneficent, and devoted to a zealous imitation of the goodness of God, but it is not drawn down to the contentiousness and enmity of men. But these passions are enclosed in souls, imparting to the spirit a certain material character, and filling it with material privation and lifelessness.



The soul consisting according to its dianoetic power is cognoscitive of true or divine beings. But establishing itself in the intellectual life of its peculiar essence, it knows all things by simple and impartible intuitions. Ascending to the one, and folding up and laying aside all multitude which is in itself, it energizes enthusiastically and is united to the super-intellectual hyperaxis. For every where the similar is naturally united to the similar: and every cognition through similitude binds to that which is known the knower, to the sensible or object of sense-perception the perceptive, to cogitables the dianoetic, to the intelligible the noetic: and therefore also to that which is prior to intellect the flower of the intellect is correspondent. For as in other things intellect is not the highest but the cause superior to intellect, so in souls the first form of energy is not intellect but that which is more divine than the intellect. And every soul and every

intellect have two-fold energies, *viz.*, the unical which are better than intellection, and the noetic. It is necessary therefore to apprehend this intelligible, which exists *per se*, and the hyparxis, our eyes being closed to all other lives and powers. For as becoming noeidic we apprehend intellect, so becoming uniform we ascend to union, standing on the characteristic summit of intellect,—since even the eye does not otherwise see the sun than by becoming solar-formed, but not by the light from fire. Moreover, it is plain that this intelligible cannot be apprehended by a reasoning process. But, as the Oracle says, if you apply your intellect, you will come by intellectual intuitions into contact with this intelligible, and thus you will apprehend it as understanding some particular thing, *i. e.*, you cannot grasp this intelligible by laying hold of it according to a certain measure of form and knowledge. For though such simple intellections may be, they are deprived of the unical simplicity of the intelligible, and are carried into secondary conditions of the intellect, proceeding into a multitude of intelligible things. For no object of knowledge is known through or by an inferior knowledge: neither therefore is that which is super-intellect known through intellect. For all at once the intellect hurls or projects itself to a certain thing, and pronounces that this or that is apprehended, which dictum is the second from the intelligible. But if by the flower of our intellect we apprehend this intelligible, established on the summit of the first intelligible triad, are we united by a certain relation to the one which is uncoordinated with all things, and imparticipable? For if the first Father is said by the Oracle to hastily withdraw himself

from Intellect and Power, what is that which does not need that it should thus be withdrawn, but is withdrawn or isolated from all things simply, and is celebrated as the God of all? Is this also said by the Oracle in another place about the Primary Father? And the first power of the sacred reason: what is that which is above this, and does not participate of this, and is said by the Oracle to be sacred? And if the reason shining forth is named by the Oracle as a more ineffable reason, it is necessary that prior to reason Silence should subsist as a reason or productive principle, and prior to every sacred reason the deifying cause. As therefore beyond the intelligibles are the reasons or productive principles of intelligibles, things being united, so the productive principle in them subsists from another more ineffable unity, though there is a reason of the Silence prior to intelligibles, but a Silence of silent intelligibles. Perhaps, therefore, this flower of the intellect is not the flower of our whole soul. But this, *i. e.*, the flower of the intellect, is the most unical of our intellectual life, and that or the flower of the soul is the one of all the psychical powers, they being multiform. For we are not intellect alone, but discursive reason and opinion and attention and will, and prior to these powers we are one essence and many, partible and impartible. And the one shining forth is twofold: one, or the flower of the soul being the first of our powers the other being the whole essence of the center and of the all-various powers about it, but this, *i. e.*, the flower of the soul, alone unites us to the Father of the intelligibles. For the one is intellectual, but this is apprehended by the Paternal Intellect according to the one which

is in it. But the one to which all the psychical powers verge and in which they unite and center alone naturally leads us to the principle which is beyond all beings, and is the unifying power of all that is in us. So that we are rooted or planted essentially in this Principle, and by being rooted, even though we may descend from the intelligible region, we will not be estranged from our cause.



Philosophy says that a forgetfulness of eternal reasons is the cause of the departure of the soul from the Gods, and that a reminiscence of the knowledge of the eternal reasons or ideas is the cause of the return to them, but the Oracles assert that the forgetfulness and reminiscence of the paternal symbols are respectively the causes of the departure and return. Both statements are in harmony. For the soul is constituted from intellectual reasons and divine symbols, of which the former proceed from the intellectual species, but the latter from the divine unities: and we are images of the intellectual essences, but statues of the unknown symbols. And just as every soul is a pleroma of forms, but subsists wholly or simply according to one cause, thus also it indeed participates of all symbols, through which it is united to divine things, but the hyparxis of the soul in the one is separated or divided, so that every multitude in the soul is lead into one summit. For it is necessary to know this, *viz.*, that every soul differs from every other soul according to form or
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specifically, and that there are as many souls as there are species of souls. For there is first indeed according to one form a hypostasis of many individual, unical forms about matter and the composites of beings, there being one subject nature participating variously of the same form: then the essence of the soul is reason and simple form, and to this extent one soul will differ in no respect from another essentially, but will differ according to form: for by character alone will it differ. But it is form alone. Whence it is evident that every soul, even though it is replete to the same degree with the same reasons, yet is allotted a form distinct from others, just as the solar form characterizes the solar soul, and another form another soul.

