

The Chaldaick Oracles of
Zoroaster
And his Followers
With the Expositions of
Pletho and Psellus
Edited and translated to English by Thomas Stanley
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THE
CHALDAICK ORACLES
OF
ZOROASTER
and his Followers.

[Introduction]

The most considerable remains of the Chaldaick Philosophy are those Oracles which goe under the name of Zoroaster; Some indeed condemn them as supposititious, [\[a\]](#) forged by some Pseudo-Christian Greek; (perhaps the rather, because [\[b\]](#), The followers of Prodicus the Heretick, boasted that they had the secret Books of Zoroaster.) But this seems lesse probable, in regard they lye dispersed amongst several Authors; nor are they to be neglected, in that they have been held in great veneration by the Platonick Philosophers. Which sufficiently also argues that they are none of the Writings charged by [\[c\]](#) Porphyrius upon the Gnosticks, as forged by them under the name of Zoroaster, since those (as he acknowledgeth) were by the Platonick Philosophers, (of whom he instanceth Plotinus and Amelius) rejected and demonstrated to be spurious and supposititious.

Some argue that they are not Chaldaick, because many times accommodated to the Greek Style; But there are in them many so Harsh and Exotick Expressions, as discover them to be Originally forein; and where they agree in Terms with that which is proper to the Greek Philosophy, we may say of them as [\[d\]](#) Jamblichus 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 skilfull in the Greek Philosophy.

To perswade us that they are genuine, and not of Greekish Invention, [\[p. 4\]](#) [\[e\]](#) Mirandula professeth 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 Arabick and Chaldaick Learning by certain Books in both those Languages, which came to my Hands, not accidentally, but doubtlesse by the Disposall of God in favour of my Studies. Hear the inscriptions, and you will believe it. The Chaldaick 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, (adds he) an Exposition by the Chaldæan Wise-men upon these Oracles, short and knotty [difficult], but full of Mysteries; There is also a Book of the Doctrines of the Chaldaick Theology, and upon it a Divine and copious Discourse of the Persians, Græcians, and Chaldæans; Thus Mirandula, after whose Death these

Books were found by Ficinus, but so worn and illegible that nothing could be made out of them; Further, To confirm that these Oracles were (as we said) Translated into Greek by persons skilfull in the Greek Philosophy, let us call to mind that Berosus [f] introduced the writings of the Chaldeans concerning Astronomy and Philosophy amongst the Græcians; and that Julian the Son, a Chaldean Philosopher, [g] Wrote Theurgick Oracles in Verse, and other secrets of that Science: and probably, if these were no part of that Chaldaick Learning which Berosus first render'd in Greek, they yet might be some of the Theurgick Oracles (for such the Title speaks them) of Julian; for some of them are cited by Proclus as such. From the accompt which Mirandula gives of those in his possession, to which were added a Comment, and a Discourse of the Doctrines of the Chaldaick Theology, it might be conjectur'd, that what is deliver'd to us by Pletho and Psellus, who besides the Oracles, give us a comment on them, together with a Chaldaick summary, was extracted out of that Author which Mirandula describes to have been of the same Kind and Method, but much more Perfect and Copious.

This 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 deliver'd by the Oracle it self; for [h] Stephanus testifies that the Chaldæans had an Oracle which they held in no lesse Veneration than the Greeks did theirs at Delphi: This Opinion may be confirmed by the high Testimonies which the Platonick Philosophers give of them, calling them [i] the Assyrian Theology revealed by God, and the Theology deliver'd by God. And Proclus elsewhere having cited as from the Gods, one of these Oracles which speaks of the Ideas, (a Platonic Doctrine) adds, that hereby the Gods declared the subsistence of Ideas, and acquiesceth as satisfied in that the Gods themselves ratifie the contemplations of Plato.

Some of these Oracles which escaped the injuries of time, were first publish'd by Ludovicus Tiletanus, anno 1563. at Paris; together with the commentaries of Gemislus Pletho, under the Title of [p. 5] *the Magical Oracles of the Magi descended from Zoroaster*, the same were afterwards Translated and put forth by Jacobus Marthanus, and lastly together with the comment of Psellus also, by Johannes Opsopæus at Paris. 1607.

These by Franciscus Patricius were enlarged with a plentiful Addition out of Proclus, Hermias, Simplicius, Damascius, Synesius, Olympiodorus, Nicephorus, and Arnobius: encreasing them [k] by his own accompt, to 324. and reducing them for the better perspicuity to certain general Heads, put them forth and Translated them into Latine anno 1593.

They were afterwards put forth in Latin by [l] Ottho Heurnius, anno 1619. under the Title of *The sincere Magical Oracles of Zoroaster King of Bactria, and Prince of the Magi*; but Heurnius under the pretence of putting [m] them into good Latin, (as he calls it) and polishing them with a rougher File, hath patch'd up and corrupted what Patricius deliver'd faithfully and sincerely, endeavoring to put these Fragments into a Continued Discourse, which in themselves are nothing Coherent but Dispersed amongst several Authors.

Patricius indeed hath taken much Learned pains in the Collection of them; but with lesse 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 redresse 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 professeth 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 withall else where, and some Conjectures to supply the Defect we mention'd.

And whhreas many of these Oracles are so Broken and Obscure, that they may at first sight seem rather Ridiculous than Weighty, yet he who shall consider, that as many of them as are explain'd by Pletho, Psellus, and others, would without those Explications seem no lesse absurd than the rest, but being explain'd 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.

NOTES

a.

Beza.

b.

Clam. Strom.

- c. vit. plotin.
 - d. de Myst. Ægypt.
 - e. Epist.
 - f. Joseph contra Apion. I.
 - g. Suid. in voce Julianus.
 - h. De urb.
 - i. Procl. in Tim.
 - k. Zoi. pag. 4 b.
 - l. Philos. barbar.
 - m. pag.
-
-

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**THE ORACLES OF
ZOROASTER**
Collected by
Franciscus Patricius.

MONAD. DUAD. TRIAD.

Where the Paternal **Monad** is.

The **Monad** is enlarged, which generates two.

For the **Duad** sits by him, and glitters with Intellectual Sections.

And to govern all Things, and to Order every thing not Ordered,

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

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 then All things were divided.

For the Mind of the Eternal Father said into three,

Governing all things by the Mind.

And there appeared in it [the **Triad**] Virtue and wisdom,

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,

Another the third, ærial; which cherisheth the Earth in fire.

And fountain of fountains, and of all fountains.

The Matrix containing all things.

Thence abundantly springs forth the Generation of multivarious Matter.

Thence extracted a prester the flower of glowing fire,

Flashing into the Cavities of the Worlds: 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.
For the Father perfected All things, and deliver'd them over to the second Mind,
Which the whole Race of Men calls the First.

Light begotten of the Father; for he alone

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Having cropt the flower of the Mind from the Fathers 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.
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 persist in Love.
For it is the Bound of the paternal Depth, and the Fountain of the Intellectuals.
Neither went he forth, but abided in the paternal Depth,
And in the Adytum according to Divinely-nourished silence.
For the fire once above, shutteth not his Power
Into Matter by Actions, but by the Mind.
For the paternal Mind hath sowed Symbols through the World
Which understandeth intelligibles, and beautifieth ineffables.
Wholly Division and Indivisible.
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.
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 Empyræal Heaven.
For the Framer of the fiery World is the Mind of the Mind.
You who know certainly the supermundane paternal Depth.
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 Sections. [Raies] [rays -JHP].
But it behooves not to consider this Intelligible with Vehemence of Intellection,
But with ample flame of the ample Mind, which measureth all things
Except this Intelligible: but it behooves to understand this.

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For if thou enclinest thy Mind, thou shalt understand this also,
Not fixedly, but having a pure turning Eye [thou must]
Extend the empty Mind of thy Soul towards the Intelligible,
That thou mayst learn the Intelligible, for it exists beyond the Mind.
But every Mind undeerstands 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
By yielding are subservient to the persuasive Counsel of the Father.
And to understand, and alwayes to remain in a restlesse Whirling.
Fountains and Principles; to turn, and alwayes remain in a restlesse Whirling.

But insinuating into Worlds the Venerable Name in a sleeplesse whirling,
By reason of the terrible menace of the Father.
Under two Minds the Life-generating fountain of Souls is contained;
And the Maker, who self-operating framed the World.
Who sprang out of the first Mind.
Cloathing fire with fire, binding them together to mingle.
The fountainous Craters preserves the flower of his own fire.
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.
Power is with them, Mind is from Her.

JYNGES. IDÆAS. 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 Immaterialls.
Principles which have understood the intelligible Works of the Father.
Disclosed them in sensible Works as in Bodies;
Being (as it were) the Ferry-men 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, understanding by Vigorous Counsel,
Omni-form Idæa's; and flying out of one fountain
They spring 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 distributed
Into other intellectuals: for the King did set before the multi-form World
An intellectual, incorruptable Pattern; this Print through the World he promoting, of whose form
According to which the World appeared
Beautified with all kinds of Idæa's; of which there is one fountain,
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Out of which come rushing forth others undistributed,
Being broken about the Bodies of the World, which through the vast Recesses,
Like swarms are carried round about every Way.
Intellectual Notions from the paternal fountain cropping the flower of fire.
In the Point of sleeplesse time, of this primigenious Idea.
The first self-budding fountain of the Father budded.
Intelligent **Jynges** do (themselves) also understand from the father:
By unspeakable Counsels being moved so as to understand.

HECATE. SYNOCHES. TELETARCHS.

For out of Him spring all
Implacable Thunders, and the Prester-receiving cavities
Of the Intirely-lucid strength of Father-begotten **Hecate**.
And He who beguirds (*viz.*) the flower of fire, and the strong
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**,
Oh how the World hath Intellectual guides inflexible!
Because she is the Operatrix, because she is the Dispensatrix of Life-giving fire.
Because also it fills the Life producing bosome of **Hecate**.

And instills in the **Synoches** the enlivening strength
Of potent fire.
But they are Guardians of the Works of the Father.
For he disguises himself, possessing
To be cloathed with the Print of 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**
Having put on the compleatly-armed Vigour of resounding Light.
With triple 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 stiffely
These frame indivisibles, and sensibles,
And Corporiformes, and things destin'd to matter.

SOUL. NATURE.

For the Soule being a bright fire, by the power of the Father
Remaines Immortall, and is Mistris [Mistress -JHP] of Life;
And possesseth many Complexions of the Cavities of the World:
For it is in Imitation of the Mind; but that which is born hath something of the Body.

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The Channels being intermix'd, 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.
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,
But about the shoulders of the Goddess, immense Nature is exalted.
Again, indefatigable Nature commands the Worlds and Works.
That 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.

THE WORLD.

The 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 Membranous.
The whole World of Fire, Water, and Earth,
And all-nourishing Æther
The unexpressible 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:
Fiery Channel, where it descends to the material Channels.
Life-bringing fire.
Stirring himself up with the goad of resounding Light.
Another fountainous, which guides the Empyræal World.
The Center from which all (Lines) which way soever are equal.

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.
He fixed a great Company of inerratick Stars.
And he constituted a Septenary of erratick Animals.
Placing Earth in the middle, and the Water in the middle of the Earth,

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The Air above these.
He fixed a great Company of inerratic Stars,
To be carried not by laborious and troublesome Tension,
But 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.
He constituted them six; casting into the midd'st,
The fire of the Sun,
Suspending their Disorder in well-ordered Lones.
For the Goddess brings forth the great Sun, and the bright Moon.
O Æther, Son, Spirit, Guides of the Moon and of the Air;
And of the solar Circles, and of the Monthly clashings,
And of the Aerial 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,
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;
And the Ætherial Course, and the vast Motion of the Moon
And the Aerial fluxions.
And the great Sun, and the bright Moon.

TIME.

The Mundane God; Æternal, Infinite.
Young, and Old, of a Spiral form.
And another fountainous, who guides the Empyræal 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;
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.
Incorporeals not being able to contain the bodies.

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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
 Crops of Empyrean fruits the soul-nourishing flower.
 And therefore conceiving the Words 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
 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
 Extend upward.
 Stoop not down to the dark World,
 Beneath which continually lies a faithlesse Depth, and Hades
 Dark all over, squallid, delighting in Images, unintelligible,
 Præcipitous, Craggy, a Depth; alwayes Rolling,
 Alwayes espousing an Opacous idle breathlesse 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 which thou didst flow.
 Thou must rise up again, joyning Action to sacred speech,
 Stoop not down, for a precipice lies below the Earth;
 Drawing through the Ladder which hath seven steps, beneath which is the Throne of Necessity,
 Enlarge not thou thy Destiny.
 The soul of Men will in a manner clasp God to her self;
 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
 To the work of piety, thou shalt preserve the fluxible body.
 There is a room for the Image also in the Circumlucid place.
 Every way to the unfashioned Soul stretch the rains of fire.
 The fire-glowing Cogitation hath the first rank.
 For the Mortal approaching the fire, shall have Light of God.
 For to the slow Mortal the Gods are swift.
 The Furies are stranglers of Men.
 The burgeons, even of ill matter, are profitable and good.
 Let hope nourish thee in the fiery Angelical Region.
 But the paternal Mind accepts not her will,
 Untill she go out of Oblivion, and pronounce a Word,
 Inserting the remembrance of the pure paternal Symbol.
 [p. 35]
 To these he gave the docible Character of Life to be comprehended.
 Those that were asleep he made fruitful by his own strength.
 Defile not the Spirit, nor deepen a Superficies.
 Leave not the Drosse of matter on a Præcipice.
 Bring her not forth, lest 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 easie to be loosed.
 In the side of sinister **Hecate**, there is a fountain of Virtue;

Which remains entire within, not omitting 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;
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 wide flight of Birds is not veracious.
And the Dissections of Entrails and Victims, all these are toys,
The supports of gainfull cheats; fly thou these,
If thou intend to open the sacred Paradise of Piety
Where Virtue, Wisdome, and Æquity are assembled.
For thy Vessel the Beasts of the Earth shall inhabit.
These the Earth bewails, even to their Children.

DÆMONS. RITES.

Nature persuades there are pure Dæmons;
The burgeons, even of ill matter, are profitable and good,
But these things I revolve in the recluse Temples of my mind,
Extending the like fire sparkingly into the spacious Air
Or fire unfigured, a voice issuing forth.
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 devested,
Or shooting and standing on [thy] shoulders.
If thou speak often to me, thou shalt see absolutely that which is spoken:
For then neither appears the Coelestial concave Bulk,
Nor do the Stars shine; the Light of the Moon is cover'd,
The Earth stands not still, but all things appear Thunder.
Invoke not the self-conspicuous Image of Nature;
For thou must not behold these before thy Body be initiated.
When soothing souls they alwayes seduce them from these Myteries.
Certainly out of the cavities of the Earth spring Terrestrial Dogs,

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Which show no true signe to mortal Man.
Labour about the **Hecatick Strophalus**
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,
Hear the voice of Fire.

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PLETHO [Plethon] HIS EXPOSITION Of the more obscure passages in these Oracles.



"Seek thou the way of the Soul, whence or by what Order
Having served the body, to the same order from which thou didst flow.
Thou mayst rise up againe; joyning 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, that is, 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 hath done in Life. The Oracle therefore sayeth, *seek thou the Souls path*, or the way by which the Soul flowed into thee; or by what course (*viz* of Life) having performed thy charge toward the Body, thou mayst Mount up to the same place from which thou didst flow down, *viz.* the same Track of the Soul, *joyning action to sacred speech*. By *sacred speech*, he understands that which concerns Divine Worship; by action, Divine Rites. The Oracle therefore sayeth, that to this Exaltation of the Soul, both speech concerning Divine Worship (Prayers,) and Religious Rites (Sacrifices) are requisite.

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"Stoop not down, for a præcipice lies below on the Earth,
Drawing through the Ladder which hath seven steps; beneath which
Is the Throne of Necessity." /

He calls the Descention into wickednesse, and misery, a Precipice; the Terrestrial and Mortall Body, the Earth: for by the Earth he understands mortal Nature, as by the fire frequently the Divine; by the place with seven Wayes, he means Fate dependant on the Planets, beneath which there is seated a certain dire and unalterable Necessity: The Oracle therefore adviseth, that thou stoop not down towards the mortal Body, which being Subject only to the Fate, which proceeds from the Planets, may be reckon'd amongst those things which are at our Arbitrement: for thou wilt be unhappy if thou stoop down wholly to the Body, and unfortunate and continually failing of thy Desires, in regard of the Necessity which is annex'd to the Body.

"For thy Vessel the Beasts of the Earth shall inhabit." /
The *Vessel* of thy Soul, that is this mortal Body, shall be *inhabited* by Worms and other vile Creatures.

"Enlarge not Thou thy Destiny." /
Endeavour not to encrease thy Fate, or to do more then is given thee in charge, for thou wilt not be able.

"For nothing proceeds from the paternal principality imperfect." /
For from the paternal Power, which is, that of the supream God, nothing proceedeth imperfect, so as thou thy selfe mightest compleat it; for all things proceeding from thence are perfect; as appears, in that they tend to the perfection of the Universe.

"But the Paternal Mind accepts not her will,
Untill she go out of Oblivion, and pronounce a Word,
Inserting the remembrance of the pure paternal Symbol." /
The Paternal Mind, (*viz.* the Second God and ready Maker of the Soul) admits not her Will or Desire untill she come out of [p. 39] the Oblivion, which she contracted by Connexion with the Body; and untill she speak a certain 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 behooves thee to hasten to the Light, and to the beams of the Father:

from whence there was sent to thee a Soul endued with much mind." /

The Light and splendour of the Father is that Mansion of the Soul which is circumlucid, from whence the Soul array'd with much of mind was sent hither, wherefore We must hasten to return to the same Light.

"These the Earth bewails, even to their Children." /

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 Wickednesse of the Parents is transmitted to the Children, corrupted by them through ill Education.

"The unguirders of the Soul, which give her breathing, are easie to be loosed." /

The Reasons which expell the Soul from Wickednesse, and give her breathing, are easie to be untied; and the Oblivion which keeps them in, is easily put off.

"In the side of the sinister bed there is a fountain of Virtue:

Which remains entire within; not emitting 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 alwayes in us the power of Virtue without passion which cannot be put off; although her Energy or Activity may be interrupted: he saith the power of Virtue is placed on the left side, because her Activity is seated on the [p. 40] 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 her self.

Having nothing mortal, she is wholly inebriated from God

Foir she boasts Harmony, in which the mortal Body consists." /

The human Soul will in a manner clasp God, and joyn him strictly to her self, (who is her continual Defence) by resembling him as much as she can possibly; having nothing mortal within her, she is wholly drench'd in Divinity, or replenished with Divine goods, for though she is fetter'd 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 her self 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;

Remains immortal, and is Mistresse 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 supream God, these Oracles call all along, *The power of the Father*, and his *intellectual Power*, and the *paternal Mind*. He sayeth therefore, that *the Soul procreated by this power of the Father, is a bright fire*, that is, a Divine and Intellectual Essence, and *persisteth immortal* through the Divinity of its Essence, *and is Mistresse of Life*, viz. of her self, 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 hath led her Life past is allotted to every One.

[p. 41]

"Seek Paradise." /

The circumlucid Mansion of the Soul.

"Defile not the Spirit nor deepen a Superficies." /

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 inseparate actually. For they assert three kinds of Forms, One wholly separate from matter, the

Supercelestial Intelligences; another wholly inseparable from matter, having a Substance not subsistent by it self but dependant on matter; together with which Matter, which is sometime dissolved by reason of its nature subject to Mutation, this kind of Soul is dissolved also and perisheth: 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 alwayes co-exists with Matter; and from the irrational kind, for that it is not dependant on matter; but, on the contrary, matter it is dependant on it, and it hath a proper substance potentially subsistent by it self; it is also indivisible, as well as the supercelestial Intelligences, and performing some works in some manner allyed to theirs, being it self 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 alwayes co-existent with an Ætherial Body as it's *Vehiculum*, which she by continual approximation maketh also immortal: neither is this her Vehiculum inanimate in it selfe, but is it self animated with the other species of the Soul the irrational, (which the Wise call the Image of the rational Soul) adorned with Fantasie and Sense which seeth and hears it self 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 joyned to such a Body and by such a Body sometimes the humane Soul is joyned with a Mortal Body by a certain affinity of Nature, the whole being infolded in the whole enlivening Spirit of the Embryon. This Vehiculum it selfe being of the nature of a Spirit. The Dæmons Souls differ not much from the humane, onely they are more noble and use more noble Vehicles: Moreover, they cannot be mingled with corruptible Nature: Likewise the Souls of the Starres are much better than the Dæmons, and use better Vehicles; are Bodies splendid by reason of the greatnesse of the operative faculty: These Doctrines concerning the Soul the Magi, followers of Zoroastres, seem to have used long before. Defile not this kind of Spirit of the Soul, sayeth the Oracle, nor deepen it being a superficies; He calls it Superficies, not as if it had not a triple Dimension [p. 42] for it is a Body, but to signifie its extraordinary rarity: nor make it become grosse by accession of more matter to its Bulk: for this Spirit of the Soul becomes grosse, if it declines too much towards the mortal Body.

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

He calls the *Image* of the Soul that part which being it self voyd of irrational, is joyned to the rational part, and depends upon the Vehicle thereof: now he saith 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 drosse of matter on a Precipice." /

He calls the mortal Body *the Drosse of matter*, and exhorteth 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." /

Carry not forth, meaning the Soul, out of the mortal Body *lest by going forth* thou incur some danger, implying as much as to carry her forth beyond the lawes of Nature.

"If thou extend the fiery mind to the work of Piety, thou shalt preserve the flexible Body." /

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 Rites.

"Certainly out of the cavities of the Earth spring terrestrial Dogs;

Which show no true signe to mortal Man." /

Sometimes to many initiated Persons there appear, whilst they are sacrificing, some Apparitions in the shape of *Doggs* and several other figures. Now the Oracle saith, that these *issue out of the Receptacles of the Earth*, that is, out of the terrestrial and mortal Body, and [p. 43] 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; meer appearances having no substance, and therefore *not signifying any thing true*.

"Nature perswadeth that Dæmons are pure;

The bourgeons even of ill matter, are profitable and good." /

Nature or natural Reason *perswadeth 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 dependant upon Matter are such: also he calls Matter *ill*, not as to it's substance, for how can the substance be bad the bloomings whereof are beneficial and good? but for that it is ranked last among the substance; and is the least participant of good, which littlenesse of good is here exprest 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." /

The furies or the Vindictive Dæmons clasp Men close, or restrain and drive them from Vice and excite them to Vertue.

"Let the immortal depth of the soul be prædominan; but all thy Eyes

Extend quite upward" /

Let the *divine depth of thy Soul* governe, and lift thou all thy Eyes or all thy knowing faculties *Upward*.

"O Man, the machine of boldest Nature" /

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;

For there neither appears the cælestial concave bulk; [p. 44]

Nor do 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 every where: 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." /

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 initiated Persons, as Thunder, Lightning, and all else whatsoever, are only Symbols or Signes, not the Nature of God.

"Every way to the unfashioned Soul stretch out the reins of fire." /

Draw unto thy selfe 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 depths of the World

Hear the voice of Fire." /

When thou beholdest the divine fire voyd of figure *brightly gliding up and down the world* and graciously smiling, listen to this Voice as bringing a most perfect Prascence.

"The Paternal mind hath implanted Symbols in Souls." /

The Paternal Mind viz. the sedulous Maker of the Substance of the Soul, *hath ingrafted Symbols* or the Images of Intelligibles *in Souls*, by which every Soul possesseth in her self the reasons of beings.

[p. 45]

"Learn the intelligible, for as much as it exists beyond thy Mind." /

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 behooves thee to have actually the knowledge of the Intelligible.

"There is a certain Intelligible which it behooves thee to comprehend with the flower of thy Mind." /

The Supream 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 Supream and singular Part of our understanding.

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

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 anything be brought forth by this god, and formed after the likeness of Him, and the other intelligible Substance, it proceeds from the Supream 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 Jynges do themselves also understand from the Father; By unspeakable counsels being mooved so as to understand." /

He calls *Jynges* the Intellectual Species which are *conceived by the Father; they themselves also being conceptive*, and exciting conceptions or Notions, *by unspeakable* or unutterable *Counsells*: by *Motion* here is understood Intellection not transition, but simply the habitude to Notions so as unspeakable Counsels is as much as unmooved, for speaking consists in Motion: the meaning is this, that these Species are immoveable and have a habitude to Notions not transciently as the Soul.

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"Oh how the World hath intellectual Guides inflexible?" /

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 of 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;

Neither hath he shut up his own fire in his Intellectual power." /

The Father made himself exempt from all others, not including himself neither in his own Intellectual Power, not in the second God who is next him; or liiting his own Fire his own Divinity; for it is absolutely ungenerate, and it self existing by it self; 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 perswasion." /

The Father makes an impression of fear, but infuseth perswasion or love, for He being extreamly good, is not the cause of ill to any, so as to be dreadful; but is the cause of all 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.*

PSELLUS
His
EXPOSITION
of the Oracles.

"There is a room for the Image also in the Circumlucid place." /

Images, [gif], with the Philosopher, are those things which are connatural to things more Excellent then themselves, and are worse then 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, Nature; of Nature, the Body; of the Body, Matter. Here the *Chaldaick Oracle* calleth the irrational Soul the Image of the rational, for it is connatural to it in Man, and yet worse then it. It sayeth, 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 Vertues 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 circum-nebulous, that is, dark on every side: but the Lunary, 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 saith, that the circumlucid Place, is not design'd only for the rational Soul, but for its Image also, or the irrational Soul is destin'd 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 *Chaldaick Oracle*, it being pure and unanimous with the rational Soul, seats it in this circumlucid Region above the Moon. These are the Doctrines of the *Chaldæans*.

[p. 48]

"Leave not the Dregs of matter on a precipice." /

By *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 art clothed, (and which is *dregs of Matter*, that is, a thing neglected and rejected, the sport of Matter) in the inferiour World: for this Place, the Oracle calls a *Præcipice*. Our Soul being darted down hither from heaven, as from a sublime place. It exhorteth therefore, that we refine the Body (which he understands by the Dregs of Matter) by Divine fire, 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 Ætherial or Cælestial, which *Elias* the *Thisbite* attained; and, before him, *Enoch*, being Translated from this Life into a more Divine Condition, not leaving the dregs of Matter, or their Body, in a precipice; the Precipice is, as we said, the Terrestrial Region.

"Bring not forth, lest going forth she have something." /

This Oracle is recited by *Plotinus* in his Book of the Education of the irrational Soul; it is an Excellent and Transcendent Exhortation. It adviseth, that a Man busie not himself about the *going forth of the Soul*, nor take care how it shall go out of the Body; but remit the Businesse of its dissolution to the Course of Nature; for, Anxiety and Solitude about the Solution of the Body, and the Education of the Soul out of it, draws away the Soul from better Cogitations, and busieth 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 goeth forth not quite free, but retaining something of a passionate Life. Passion the Chaldæan defines, A Mans sollicitous thinking of Death; for we ought not to think of any thing, but of the more Excellent Illuminations; neither concerning these ought we to be sollicitous, but resigning our selves to the Angelical and Diviner 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. Some interpret this Oracle more simply; *Bring it not out lest it go forth, having something*: that is, Anticipate not thy natural Death, although thou be wholly given up to Philosophy; for as ~t thou hast not

a compleat Expiation; So that if the Soul passe [p. 49] out of the Body by that 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* saith,) certainly no Man can kill himself, but must expect till God shall send a Necessity.

"Subject not to thy Mind the vast measures of the Earth:

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 veracious:

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 Græcian Wisdome, and teacheth him to adhere only to God, *subject not* (saith he) *to thy Mind the vast Measure of the Earth; for the plant of Truth is not upon Earth;* that is, Enquire not solicitously 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 æternal will of the Father, not for thy sake,* That is, Busie not thy self 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 ætherial 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.