

The Athenian Gazette,

Resolving WEEKLY all the most

Nice and Curious Questions

Propos'd by the I N G E N I O U S.

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ALL Ages (as if *Athens* had been the Original,) have been Curious in their Inquiries; *Curiosity* it self being so much a part of Nature, that there is no laying it aside till the whole Frame is dissolv'd; 'tis not without great importunity we have undertaken a task of this Nature, which at first sight appears to be a Subject chosen out and calculated on purpose for *Objections*; but yet a Consideration of those Advantages a great part of the World may reap by it, has superseded that Difficulty. The Design is briefly, to satisfy all ingenious and curious Enquirers into Speculations, Divine, Moral and Natural, &c. and to remove those Difficulties and Dissatisfactions, that shame or fear of appearing ridiculous by asking Questions, may cause several Persons to labour under, who now have opportunities of being resolv'd in any Question without knowing their Informer. And if at any time the Answer is not so satisfactory as they could wish, let them as directed by the Advertisement, mention in what particular, and they shall have a fuller satisfaction in the next Paper. These following Questions have already been proposed with others, which shall have their Answer in the next, there being not room enough in this.—See the Advertisement.

Quest. 1. Whether the Torments of the damn'd are visible to the Saints in Heaven? & vice versa?

Answer. This presupposes another Question. (*viz.*) In what State or Condition the Bodies of the Just and unjust shall arise at the day of Judgment. The Consequence of which Answer will Resolve the first Question; in order to which we affirm, that they shall both arise alike, equally Immortal, and equally qualified for an Eternity of Duration, diversify'd in nothing but their last Sentence. Neither State shall so much as change a Thought, but think of all things together, which will be actually present to the Intellect of both: We shall then see (as the Author of *Religio Bibliopolæ* expresses it) not by receiving the visible Species into the narrow glass of an Organized Eye; we shall then hear without the distinct and curious Contexture of the Ear. The Body shall then be all Eye, all Ear, all Sense in the whole, and every Sense in every part. In a word, it shall be all over a common Sensorium, and being made of the purest Aether, without the mixture of any lower or grosser Element; the Soul shall by one undivided Act, at once Perceive all that variety of Objects, which now cannot without several distinct Organs, and successive Actions or Passions, reach our Sense. Every sense shall be perfect, the Ear shall hear

mits, both of *Heaven* and *Hell* with a perfect distinction, and without confounding that Anthem with this Blasphemy; the Eye shall find no matter or Substance to fix it; and so of the other Senses, the reason of this is plain and convincing, for if both (I mean the Bodies of the Just and unjust) were not thus qualified, they could not be proper Subjects for the Exercise of an Eternity, but would consume and be lyable to dissolution or new Changes. Hence we assert that every Individual Person in *Heaven* and *Hell*, shall hear and see all that passes in either State; these, to a more exquisite aggravation of their Tortures, by the loss of what the other enjoy, and those to a greater increase of their Blis in escaping what the other suffer.—See the Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus*.

Quest. 2. Whether the Soul is Eternal, or pre-existent from the Creation, or contemporary with its Embrio?

Answer, Souls are not Eternal, for then they would be Gods, and not Created Beings (Creation supposing a Commencement of time) and that they are Created Beings, we have the Testimony of Scripture.—Nor is the Creation of Souls contemporary with any of the six Days labours, because, 'tis as impossible they should be idle, (being pure Acts) as 'tis impossible for the Fire not to burn. But no Person could ever yet produce one Instance of their preexistent acting: As to those that alledge, *How do we know that they do not act in some Region or Place assigned to them, where we can have no means left to inform us in what Instances, or after what manner they Act?* We answer, that we may suppose Worlds (as some already have) in the Sun, Moon, and every Star; but such suppositions are unaccountable, and therefore below the dignity of our Reason, which has enough to do in unriddling many things that really are, without loosing our selves in the stragling whimsys of what are not otherwise than as Fancy gives 'em Life. Nor will our Maintainers of Preexistence find any Service in that Text. (*viz.* And on the sixth day God ended his Work which he had made. For tho' it be Litterally true quoad Deum, to whom time past, present, and to come, is the same, yet 'tis not so quoad Hominem; for we see daily many immediate Instances of the Almighty's Works by Judgments, Escapes, &c. Which have not been left to the Establish'd Order of Nature, and second Causes. Besides, 'tis observable, that tho' Adam was the last of the Creation, yet his Soul was made after his Body, as may be gathered

God formed Man of the Dust of the Ground, and breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life, and he became a living Soul. Hence we conclude, that the Soul is only contemporary with its Embrio, since there can be no demonstration made of its Actings, prior, to what are apparent in that Organ.

Quest. 3. Whether every Man has a good and bad Angel attending him?

Ans. The Ministration of Angels is certain, but the manner how, is the Knot to be untyed. 'Twas generally believed by the Ancient Philosophers, That not only Kingdoms had their Tutelary Guardians, but that every person had his particular Genius or good Angel to protect and admonish him by Dreams, Visions, &c. We read that Origen, Hierome, Plato, and Empedeoles in Plutarch, were also of this Opinion, and the Jews themselves, as appears by that Instance of Peter's deliverance out of Prison, who retreating to his Friends House, the unexpectedness of his Escape, made 'em believe it could not be Peter, but his Angel. We are not without Examples of the Friendly Offices of Angels. Witness Grinaeus, his Admonition and Escape from Spires: Vide Melancton's Commentary upon Daniel; Bodinus his Relation of his Friends Celestial Monitor, with many more, which would be too tedious to recount particularly; and as to the attendance of Bad Angels, we have the Manichees and Priscillianists as Patrons of that Doctrine, but these have been Anathematiz'd as Impious, Groundless, and Heretical; add to these the Opinion of many Modern Casuists, who believe that the Damn'd immediately turn to tempting Devils, and then every Man must have thousands attending him, or they would be most of them idle, who since the Creation are Increas'd to so great a Number; but this is supposition only, and therefore too weak a Basis to build an Article of Faith upon. We positively affirm, that every Infant has his Particular Angel, Matth. 18. 10. and that it is a good Angel is deducible from Matth. 19. 14. nor can we believe that good Angels cease to preside over adult Persons, tho' never so Vicious, Luke 15. 10. But for the particular attendance of Bad Angels, we believe it not, and we must deny it till it finds better proof than Conjectures.

Quest. 4. Where was the Soul of Lazarus for the four days he lay in the Grave?

Ans. It was neither in Heaven nor Hell; if it had been in Heaven, it had been a great cruelty to have depriv'd it of the Beatifick Vision, and sent it again into it's Body to hazard another possibility of Damnation:--If it had been in Hell, then that Doctrin falls to the ground, That there is no Redemption from thence; But we are assured, that Hell was not it's Mansion, Lazarus being a Friend, a Disciple and Believer of the Messias; so that we conclude, that those Angels which had Commission for the Reception of the Souls of Lazarus, the Shunamites Child, &c. had also an extraordinary Order to retain them in their Custody, till the time limited for their re-entry into their respective Bodies, as an extraordinary Translation was to Enoch, Moses and Elias, both being particular Exceptions from the general Rule, It is appointed for all Men once to die, and after that the Judgment; which Judgment or entrance into a future or irrevocable State, is immediately upon the death of other Persons, as is evident from the Parable of Dives and Lazarus.

Quest. 5. Whether all Souls are alike?

Ans. All Souls are of equal Excellency and Perfection, as well the Soul of an Embryo, as of Aristotle; if you speak of the essential or specific

the singulars or individua of the same Species: for there is but one specific difference by which Man, and every particular Man is distinguished from the Beasts, so that one Man is not more reasonable than another. It is true, that the genus may be more perfect in one species than in another; so Man is a more excellent Creature than a Beast, because the difference of Rationality which is in Man, is more excellent than the Irrationality of Beasts: But Peter is not a more excellent Man than Paul, because the specific difference is not more in Peter than in Paul; in respect of some accidental differences, there may be some inequality, but these concern nothing the nature or essence of Man: even so, one Soul may have more knowledge, or other accidental perfections than another, in respect of fitter organs, and a better disposed phantasie; otherwise the same essential excellence is equal in all, and the Soul of a fool is not less excellent than that of Solomon, nor of an Embryo, than of him who hath lived a hundred years, except in accidental perfections, as I have said: for had the Embryons Soul the same perfection of Organs, and Phantasie, that the Soul of Aristotle had, she would exercise the same organical Acts that he did; the same, I say, that immediately flow from, and depend upon the Soul.

Quest. 6. Whether 'tis lawful for a Man to beat his Wife?

Ans. The affirmative would be very disobliging to that Sex, without adding any more to it, therefore we ought to be as cautious and tender as may be in asserting such an ill natur'd Position.—We allow a Wife to be naturaliz'd into, and part of her Husband, and yet nature sometimes wars against part of it self, in ejecting by Sweat, Urine, &c. what otherwise would be destructive to it's very Frame; nay, sometimes there is occasion of greater violence, as lancing, burning, dismembring, &c. which the Patient submits to as his Interest: Now if a Man may thus cruelly treat himself, and be an Accessary to his own Torture, he may legally chastise his Wife, who is no nearer to him than he is to himself, but yet (for I am not covetous of the Fate of Orpheus) as none but Doctors are proper Judges of seasonable Violences to nature; so there are but few Husbands that know how to correct a Wife. To do it in a passion, and pretend Justice, is ridiculous; because that passion incapacitates the Judgment from it's Office; and to do it when one is pleas'd, is a harder Task; so that we conclude, as the legality is unquestionable, so the time and measure are generally too critical for a Calculation; when a Wife goes astray, 'tis safe to use a Sympathetick Remedy, as the rebuke of a Kiss: the Antipathetick may prove worse than the Disease.

Quest. 7. How came the Spots in the Moon?

Ans. The Musli and Mabometan Doctors teach, That the Angel Gabriel, to avoid a Blazing Comet, as he flew along, dasht the pinion of one of his Wings against the Moon, which was the cause of those Spots; but they forget how they tacitely charge the Angel with an inconsiderate rashness and want of Skill, besides the Monster they make him, who could cause so great a blemish as to be discernable to us at such a distance: we affirm, that in it's Creation it was made an Opake and dark Body illuminable by the Sun, as more proper for the Regiment of the Night, a time of Repose and Cessation from labour.

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All Persons whatever may be resolved gratis in any Question that their own Satisfaction or Curiosity shall prompt 'em to, if they send their Questions by a Penny Post Letter to Mr. Smith at his Coffee-house in Stocks Market in the Poultry, where orders are given for the Reception of such Letters, and care shall be taken for their Resolution.