

The Athenian Mercury:

Saturday, June 25. 1692.

Quest. 1. **T**He Holy Bible being faithfully translated out of the Original Tongues, is our only Rule of Life, and is experienced to be every way sufficient thereunto: But there are some who tell us the Original Copies from whence our present English Translation hath been taken are not the same with those that immediately proceeded from God at first; but have received many alterations since then, which befell the Old Testament (as they suppose) either from the Malice of the Jews, or else by the Injury of the length of time, wherein they say it hath suffered the like fate of other Books: It is therefore desired you would tell us whether the Original Copy from whence our Bible is taken, be the same that at first proceeded from God without any material alteration, or not, seeing if it be the same, we are well enough, but if it be not, we have no Rule of Obedience among us that we know of?

Ans. Our Bookseller hath newly published a Book wherein this Question is fully answered, (Entituled, *The Compleat Library*.) in a Discourse concerning the Integrity of the Hebrew Bible, wherein 'tis proved, by divers Arguments, that the present Original Copy is the same that at first proceeded from God without any material Alteration befallen it either by the Malice of the Jews, or the Injury of the length of time, or any other way whatsoever. In which Discourse the Question is not only plainly stated and proved, but also the several Objections of *Ludovicus Capellus*, and others, against the Integrity of the Hebrew Bible, are fully answered.

Some time since we receiv'd a Paper of Queries, dated *Dublin*, which had almost bin lost among the Crowd; but having lately discover'd 'em, we shall here answer as many of 'em as we think convenient.

Quest. 2. Does the Scripture any where affirm an Election of a determinative number of men to Eternal Life and Happiness?

Ans. It's an easie matter to be mistaken in things of this Nature: However, if we are so, we'll profess our selves ready to change our Opinion on the producing better reasons, and in the mean time not to have either angry or uncharitable thoughts of those who are of a different Judgment. To the Question, We can't be satisfied by any of those Scriptures which are brought for that purpose, that there is any such Election of a determinative number as either puts a force on their Natures, and irresistibly saves them, or absolutely excludes all the rest of Mankind from Salvation. The chief Texts commonly brought in favour of that Opinion, are these following: *Acts 13. 48. As many as were ordained to eternal Life believed*: But *Grotius* and *Hammond*, Mr. Mede in his Discourse on the *εὐαγγέλιον*, and others, seem to make it pretty clear, that *τεταγμένοι* here signifies no more than *Instructi* — disciplin'd, listed in the number of those who seek Eternal Life, *ταῖς* being a military word, and so used by good Authors; and accordingly St. Chrysostom as he is quoted by Dr. Hammond, interprets the place, "Separated to God, devoted, addicted, prepared" or disposed to Eternal Life. Another place most frequently urg'd, and which seems most favourable to this Opinion, is that *Eph. 1. 4. As he hath chosen us in him before the Foundation of the World*. By the word Election, says *Grotius*, is here meant vocation by the Gospel, as on the contrary Vocation is sometimes taken for Election, *1 Cor. 1. 24. To them that are called, both Jew and Gentile, Christ the power of God, &c.* Nor does (he goes on) the word Election improperly signify those great benefits reserv'd for those who were to live in the time of the *Messias*; as the word *ἐκλογη* is taken, *1 Thes. 1. 4.*

"Not that hereby is understood the actual calling of the Jews and Gentiles, but the decree for their calling. Thus far he; we add, that there's no doubt but whosoever are sav'd, receive so great a benefit, not thro' their own merits, but Gods mercy in Jesus, to whom all his works were known from the Foundation of the World, that is, from all Eternity, but yet we think there's no one place in the H. Scripture which proves that so many men and no more were irresistibly determin'd to everlasting Salvation.

Quest. 3. A virtuous young woman is sensible that her Mother keeps a scandalous house, the young Woman is her self in service in an honest Family, and desires to know how she ought to demean her self towards her Mother; whether she ought to avoid her House, and not visit her: The matter of Fact is certainly true, pray resolve what is her Duty in this Case?

Ans. She ought (we think) in the first place modestly and humbly to remonstrate with her concerning the manner of Life which she now leads, with the scandal on't at present, and the evil consequences for the future: Or if she'll not hear or mind what she says, to get some discreet Friend or Neighbour to take the Task upon 'em: But if neither of these methods prevail, we think she ought to take some Order that a Magistrate may receive Information concerning it. Our reason is, here's one of these two Evils to be chosen, either to suffer a Parent to go on in so lewd a Course of Life, which must ruine her Soul, or else to expose her to Infamy and Punishment in this World, which yet is of the two much more eligible, and perhaps may bring her to Repentance. In the mean time, if she persists in her wicked practices, without any hope of Amendment, there's little doubt but she ought to forbear her Conversation, not only from the Scandal, but the Danger of it, lest she shou'd attempt to breed her up in the same laudable Employment.

Quest. 4. Dost not the Word of God declare him guilty of Self-Murder, who being sick or wounded, would refuse and despise the use of probable Means for Recovery, tho' uneasy and painfull, because he could not know that God would Bless 'em for that End?

Ans. If there were certainly many Millions upon whom God hath absolutely resolv'd, that no means shou'd do any good, tho' they made use of 'em with the utmost care and diligence, it would be no great Encouragement to any to make use of such means. But on the contrary, we say as before, that those who do honestly use them, and do their parts, (which 'tis their own faults if they do not) may be sure that God will not be wanting in his, but blest the means to the Ends for which he has appointed them.

Quest. 5. How many years from the Laying the Foundation of Solomons Temple to the 70 years Captivity?

Ans. If the 70 years are to be reckon'd from the Captivity of *Jecanias*, it was 430 years, and 2 months, as is plain from the following Sums: The Foundation of the Temple was laid in the 2d. month of the fourth year of Solomons Reign, as we are told in *2 Chron. 3. 2.* after which he lived 36 years, 40 being all the time of his Reign. *Rehoboam* reign'd 17, *Abisam* 3, *Asa* 41, *Jehoshaphat* 25, *Jehoram* 8, *Ahaziah* 1, *Athaliah* 6, *Josiah* 40, *Amaziah* 29, *Uzziah* 52, *Jotham* 16, *Ahaz* 16, *Hekiah* 29, *Manasseh* 55, *Amon* 2, *Josiah* 31, *Jehoiakim* 3 months, *Jehoiachin* 11 year, *Jehoiachin*, or *Jecanias* 3 months, the total 430 years, two months, as above.

Quest. 6. Your Opinion of Jacob Behmen's Book entituled, *The three Principles of the Divine Essence of the Eternal Dark, Light and Temporary World, &c.* and what Religion he was of?

Ans. No doubt but *Jacob Behmen* was a Good Man, and had Curious Notions and Speculations, as the Writers of Mystick Divinity have, and their Conceptions are too fine oftentimes, like the Schoolmens Subtilties, he has endeavoured to render that intelligible which Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor hath it enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive: This he thinks he has seen in his mind, and has conceived, and can utter by Words, which are so coined and Used with so much Obscurity, that it renders the whole inconsistent, and Cras'd to a Reader of sound Judgment; altho' it be too misterious, yet *Socinians*, *Hobbits*, *Deists*, and those who wholly would have no Mysteries in Religion, but all reason, are as much Enthusiasts as he: But in *Jacob Behmen's* Works are to be seen many excellent things, for the Man at some times had lucid Intervals and Curious Conceptions, and those that would take the Pains to Garble his Writings, as they have done *Seneca's* Morals, (which are as inconsistent) they might make excellent Books of them.

Quest. 7. *What is Cotchoneal?*

Ans. Some Authors deliver their Opinions thus, That it's the Berries of a sort of Oak in *Candia*; others, that it is the Seeds of Prickle Pears; others, that it is the Insects, or Cochineal Flyes, engendred of the Fruit or the Blood of Red Pears or their Leaves: The like is in *Bermudas* and *New-England*. Red-Wood that affords a Berry, out of the Berries come Worms, those Worms turn into Flyes, which feed on the same Berries, these Flyes yield a Tincture not in the least inferior to the Cotchoneal Flyes, &c. *Vid. R. S. Transact.*

Quest. 8. *In a Book entituled, The History of the ATHENIAN SOCIETY, I find a great Commendation of the Female Sex, inequalling their Capacities to the men: Now I desire to know whether the Author of that History have not gathered together all the Women that were of any repute since the Creation to make out his pretended excellence of that Sex, and whether there were ever any example of that dullness in Man which daily conversation offers us in Women?*

Ans. The Querist seems to be highly offended at the Author of the above mention'd History, for speaking so well of the Fair Sex; however, tho' we have disown'd any Knowledge of that History 'till 'twas almost Printed, yet we must so far justify his Performance, as to defend that Point; therefore in Answer to the Querist, we must tell him that the Author has not Nam'd one half of the *Illustrious of that Sex*, which History has commended to Posterity; nor was it necessary he shou'd, since he specify'd enough to prove his Position: Nor do we here think it necessary to enumerate all that he has omitted, since that wou'd be more than we cou'd bring within the compass of one *Mercury*: However, that he may see there are more, we will instance in two or three particulars. First, *Aspatia*, mention'd by the Historian only by Name, was a Lady Eloquent, and Learn'd in both Philosophy and Poetry. *Zenobia*, in the time of *Galenus*, assum'd the Government of *Palmyra*, and great part of the East, after the Death of *Odenatus* her Husband, and maintain'd her Power by Policy and Strength against the Force of *Rome* on one hand, and that of *Persia* on the other, 'till oblig'd to yield to the Prowess of *Aurelianus*. The Wife of *Asdrubal*, *Hannibal's* Brother, disdain'd to accept of those Terms of Surrender her Husband obtain'd from the *Romans*, but with her two Sons threw her self from a lofty Tower into the Funeral Pile of her Countrey, *Carthage* being all in a Flame, resolving not to outlive the Liberty of her Countrey, tho' she might: A Courage and Resolution beyond the *Romans* that Conquer'd it. *Axiothea*, a Lady of great Wit and Soul, who disguis'd her self in Man's Cloaths to hear *Plato*, whose Disciple she was, as well as *Lasthenia* of *Mantinda*. *Magdalene Anbelpine*, Lady of *Villeroy*, was one of the greatest Ornaments of the *French* Court, for Wit and Beauty, and wrote several Pieces both in Verse and Prose, and in her Praise *Ronsard* has writ several Poems. As for the other part of his Query, *Whether there were ever any Example of that Dullness in Man, which daily Conversation offers us in Woman?* We Answer, Yes, abundant, but we shall instance only in one, and question not but if his Conversation be not with the more

fordid of this Sex, and the most refin'd of the other, his Conversation affords him Proof enough, tho' he seem to deny it: But to the instance — *Atticus*, the Son of *Herodes Atticus*, a wealthy *Athenian*, was so stupid, that he cou'd never learn his Letters, which made his Father provide him twenty four servants, to each of which he gave a Letter of the Alphabet for Name, and pinn'd their Forms and Characters on his Son's Breast, that seeing their shapes, he might be able to call every Servant by his Name; this strange expedient, our Author says, brought him at last to read, tho' he was never capable of profiting much by it. Now we desire the Querist to give us one instance of the Fair Sex equal in Dullness to *Atticus*, or indeed to himself that sent so impertinent a Query, the Ladies generally having a quicker Apprehension than the Men; so that we cannot Condemn the Historian for the Encomiums he has on that Sex to which Mankind owes its Being and Encrease.

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