

# The Athenian Mercury:

Saturday, December 10. 1692. Licens'd, E. B.

Quest. 1. **W**Hat think you of the Drs. Notion of Paradise, who believes it to be Parabolical, Chap. 7?

Ans. We think the Dr. evidently contradicts himself, for in Chap. 7. p. 278. after having cited several Opinions, he says, *Denique, qui nobiscum Sentiant in terra quidem, sed alia ab hodierna, verum Paradisum, qui jam transit, Olim floruisse tradunt.* And lastly, *The Opinion of those which we assent to, that the true Paradise was situated in the Earth that was destroy'd, not in this that is now.* And in Page 284. says, *Quod eorum captui & ingenio accommodatus, Hortum Amanum conciperere, Sec. Moses accommodatus himself to the apprehension of the People, so as to give 'em the Idea, or Notion of a pleasant Garden: And a little after, p. 287. he calls it, Allegoriam secundum Aroanum Sensum Mosis, adding atque hunc sensum eo libentius amplector, Sec. viz. That 'twas an Allegory, and that Moses had a secret meaning, and that he (the Dr.) more willingly embraced that Opinion, because there's no place in the World in which all the Notes and Characters of that Garden meet. Tho' there's no need of confuting any Notion that thus destroys it self, we shall now prove, according to our promise, That the principal Characters, viz. the four Rivers, that are mention'd in the History of Paradise, are at this day certainly known, and that the very place where the Garden stood can be assigned very near. And first, That Euphrates and Tigris, (which every one agrees were two of the Rivers) came both from the same Fountain; for these two encompassing Mesopotamia, give it its Name. Salust also asserts the same, as cited by Origen, l. 13. c. 21. de flumin. *Salustius autem Auctor certissimus Afferit Tigrim & Euphratem uno Fonte Manare in Armenia.* Salust an Authentick Author asserts, that Tigris and Euphrates proceeded from the same Fountain. The Learned Boetius was of this Judgment, who discoursing how Casual Events are guided by Providence, as the Common Fountain out of which they flow, illustrates it by the Simile of Tygris and Euphrates, de Consolat. Philosop. l. 5. Carm. 1.*

*Rupis Achaemeniae Scopulis, ubi versa sequentum,  
Peccatoribus figit Spicula pugna fugax,  
Tigris & Euphrates, uno se Fonte resolvunt,  
Et mox abjunctis dissociantur Aquis.*

Add yet to this the Testimony of Lucan in his *Pharsalia*, lib. 3.

*Quaque caput magno tollit cum Trigide magnus  
Euphrates, quos non diversis fontibus edit  
Persis*

Lucan here gives 'em the same rise, only says they came out of Persia; but 'tis notorious with the Writers of those Times to call all those Countries Persia that lay under the Dominion of the Persian Monarchy, and thus Farnab. in locum takes it. These Testimonies considered, we have two Rivers, Euphrates and Tigris: So that having the Fountain of one, we want not the other. And Ptolemy, (as also Pliny, lib. 5. cap. 24.) tells us, that Tigris issues out of the South-side of the Mountain Taurus, in lat. 27. 40. where the place of the Garden of Eden must therefore be very near.

Now we come to show, That the other Rivers were only Branches of Tigris — Tigris after having pass'd the Gordian Mountains, and being ready to enter into Syria, parts its Streams asunder, encompassing that Country. This is plain from Epiphanius in *Anchoret.* n. 58. the Eastward branch (according to Ptolemy in the Editions of Jacob Eszlar,) running on the back of the Mountain Niphates, and the Westward bends its course towards Euphrates. The Eastward is this

Gihon which the Scripture mentions: it would be too long to collect what the Ancients have said in proving, that Gyndes, Indus, and Cydnus, are the same with the River Gihon. See Sabellicus *Ennead.* l. 7. Donisius *Perrigores*, Herodotus, lib. 1. n. 189, 190. Stephanus, *Justin*, *Histor.* l. 11. Strabo in *Geog.* lib. 1. Padiamus in his Appendix to his Commentaries upon *M. la.* And lastly, Epiphanius lib. de 12. Gemmis: But this Particular being not much contested by any, we need proceed no further about the River Gihon.

As for the Westward Branch of Tigris, it separated it self again at Apadania, and made the other two Rivers Hiddekel and Pison. That there is such a Division, is plain from *Piin. Hist.* lib. 6. cap. 27. about Apadania. The Northern Streams he calls Tigris Minor, the Southern Delas, which by its Course exactly answers the Character Moses gives of it, who says that it goeth towards the East of Assyria, *Gen. 2. 14.* according to the description of *Geog. Nub.* who says, (part 6. *Clim. 4.*) *Facet ab occident. Tigris, Sec.* Thus also when Daniel was Governour of Susana, he saw his Vision upon the Banks of the great River Hiddekel, *Dan. 10. 4.*

As for the last River, the River Pison, here not only Junius, but all the Learned agree, that the Name Patsygris, given it by Pliny, and others, was dilly alter'd from Pysotygris, which exactly answers to the Scituation of the place, by several Texts, *Gen. 25. 18.* *1 Sam. 15. 7.* which is so clear, we need proceed no further.

Lastly, 'Tis observable, that all these Rivers, or the places where these Rivers lye, are mention'd in the Bible, after the Flood: So that the Earth could not possibly be destroy'd, as the Dr. would have it. See for Pison, *Eccles. 24. 25.* for Havilah, see *1 Sam. 15. 7.* for Cush, or Ethiopia, compris'd by Gihon, 'tis very frequent in profane & Sacred Writ; for Assur, or the East of Assyria, where Hiddekel was, and has now another Name, 'tis common: As for Euphrates, we need not mention it again. Thus we hope we have fairly prov'd the Scituation of the Garden of Eden, mention'd in the History of the Creation, to be no Allegory, nor Con'diction, but such a great Truth as our Drs. Theory can't shake.

Quest. 2. P. 289. *Why was not the Woman afraid of the Serpents speaking to her?*

Ans. She could't fear no ill that knew none.

Quest. 3. P. 290. *Were all the Creatures (as well as the Serpents) Vocal in Paradise as all the Trees were in the Dodonian Wood? Or was it the Serpent only; if the last, how came that to deserve the benefit of Speech above the rest?*

Ans. The Serpent only, which in a few words, has but just out-rival'd the mischief of such Questions.

Quest. 4. P. 290. *By what Authority may we believe the Devil spoke in the Serpent, for the Letter of Moses intimates no such thing?*

Ans. Yes, in *Gen. 4. 15.* He (our Saviour) shall bruise thy (Satan) head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Quest. 5. P. 291. *Why should the Serpent Ire pronus in Ventrum, Creep upon his Belly, for his Penalty? Or did he walk upon his Tail before?*

Ans. Probably not the last, but the first, that so oft as we see a Serpent, so oft we should see an Hieroglyphick of Man's Fall and Redemption.

Quest. 6. P. 292. *What would have become of the numerous issue of Adam, if he had not sinn'd, would that one Tree of Life fed 'em all, or how should they have come by it?*

Ans. See our Saviours Answer to the Devil, when he tempted him with Hunger.

Quest

Quest. 7. p. 292. *Nescio quid sive, &c. usque ad manus manum fricat?*

Ans. This could not be the modest Dr. who talks in his Preface of a *Chariorem ipsa Vita Religionem*, of Religion being dearer than Life.

Quest. 8. p. 293. *Whence had Adam and Eve their Needle and Thread in the first day of their Creation?*

Ans. There was no need of any for what you have translated *Conferunt*.

Quest. 9. p. 293. *Why did that Butcher of an Angel destroy the whole Race of some Creatures in skinning of them to Cloath Adam and Eve, for there was but two of a kind Created?*

Ans. Who tells you there was but two and two of a kind Created at first? You are not yet got to the Ark, but *Scurry*, How came any Creatures at all to be preserved when your *Earth* was destroy'd? You should Answer a Million of such Absurdities before you Catechise *Moses*, and the Sacred Truths he has laid down.

Quest. 10. p. 293. *Whether the Fable of the Dragons keeping the Apples of Hesperides be not like the Cherubims keeping the Tree of Life?*

Ans. 'Tis so like, that 'tis a Confirmation of the Truth; for near the *Thespian-Lake*, so called by *Procopius*, tho' by *Strabo* it be call'd *Arsena palus*, which is just by the Fountain of the River *Tigris*, there's a place call'd *Sypereitis*, by some *Hypereitis* and *Hysperatis*, where 'tis suppos'd the very Garden of *Eden* stood, which no doubt gave Life and Name to that Place and Fable you mention.

Quest. 11. p. 295. *Why should an Infamous Beast destroy at once the Elaborate Work of six days made by an Almighty hand?*

Ans. No, 'twas Disobedience, and *Eve's* questioning the Truth of God, as too many do in this Age.

Quest. 12. p. 281, 282. *What think you of the Dr's Paragraph upon Moses, and the Dialogue betwixt Eve and the Serpent, as also in that betwixt God, Adam, Eve and the Serpent, their Examination and Sentence?*

Ans. We look upon the greatest part of it to want that Caution and Prudence as a matter of so great consequence might have justly claim'd, especially from one of his Character. And supposing we should allow *Moses* to speak here in sense, which tho' mystical, yet not without a due and reasonable end proper for the Authority of *Moses*, (as the Dr. himself elsewhere grants) how unjust and unfair a treatment would it be to that great Law-giver to be ridicul'd, because he speaks not Physically as the Dr. does: Some passages are ludicrous enough, and suited to the Style of *Terrence's Comedies*, perhaps taken out of 'em; and the whole has such an Air in it, that the Wits of the Town have wish'd he'd have gone thro' all the Bible after the same manner; an effect We doubt not but the Dr. will be sorry to hear of.

Quest. 13. p. 306, 307. *Why is the Dr. so troubled to reconcile the Waters above the Firmament with those under the Firmament, the first of which seems to be above the Stars, the Stars being placed but in the Firmament?*

Ans. Perhaps the Dr. has not consider'd the Original of the word Firmament, in the Hebrew, which signifies an Expanse, or thing expanded: Nor are those Words of *Moses* above and under the Firmament properly translated in the English; they should not have been *supra expansum, sed desuper expanso*, a very usual Pleonasm of the Preposition *superne, super, juxta*, for the word is not *עליון* but *מעללהן* which things considered, the great Disputes that have been upon this place, need not be any distraction to us, for we find the Fovvls to be said to fly in the Firmament of Heaven, the Stars to be set in the Firmament, and *Job 26. 6. Which bindeth the waters in the Clouds, and the Cloud is not broken under them: Now it being all one Expanse, from the Face of the Earth to the highest Regions; thus Birds may be said to fly in the Firmament, and the Waters according to the foremention'd place of Job, may be said to be properly divided from the Waters below by the Firmament, or some part of the Expanse.*

Quest. 14. p. 321, 322. *The Dr. seems very sensible that his Treating of Moses at such a rate may give offence to ma-*

ny of the sober part of Mankind, and begins to raise several Objections himself, which he answers by way of Obviation: Query, *Whether his Answers are sufficient, or whether he had not better conceal'd such Notions in his own Breast, and deny'd himself a little vain Reputation, than have hazarded the Interest of Religion, especially in such an Age as this?*

Ans. His Answers are really as good as the Case will bear, and no more can be expected from 'em. To the latter part of the Question, We doubt a very unhappy Consequence will give it in the Negative.

Quest. 15. *The Dr. seems to build his whole Theory physically: Query, When did Nature arrive to such a degree of Perfection, that any thing could be said to be Naturally done?*

Ans. Nature can't be properly said to be perfect (or consequently a thing done Naturally) before the Essential Lavvs of Nature are constituted themselves by the Author of it; therefore it appears to us a great Weakness in the Dr. to talk of Physicks, and Natural Effects in a Chaos, which nothing but an Almighty hand could bring into any Order.

In the next *Mercury* will be given an Account of a very Ingenious Project newly found out for the Ladies Entertainment these Winter Evenings.

*Edm. Ghee*

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