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fixed in the midst of the Pagan festivals of the closing year, and gradually incorporated their usages with its own idea. While, therefore, we would not say with Prynne, that all pious Christians should abominate this festival, we do say that it has neither the historic dignity, the moral significance, nor the sacred associations, that every such institution should possess to command the approval of the Christian world.

ARTICLE VII.

THE PREËXISTENCE OF THE SOUL.

Translated from Keil's Opuscula Academica.

INTIMATELY connected with the notion of the three parts of man, is that which admits a certain preëxistence of the human soul. And since those teachers of the early church who favored this opinion, are said to have borrowed it from the Platonic philosophy, we propose to inquire not only which of them defended, and how they defined the same, but also from what fountains it was imbibed.

It cannot then be denied that this belief that the souls of men had existed before they were united to the body, was common, especially in the East. Thus JEROME says:[1] "As to the origin of the soul, I remember your question, or rather, the question of the whole church: Whether it be fallen from heaven as Pythagoras, the Platonists, and Origen believe, or be of the proper substance of God, as the Stoics, Manichaeans and Priscillian heretics of Spain imagine; or whether they are kept in a repository formerly built by God, as some ecclesiastics foolishly believe; or whether they are daily made by God and sent into bodies, according to that which is written in the Gospel: "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work;" or whether by traduction, as Tertullian, Apollinarius, and the greater part of the Westerns

[1] Epist. ad Marcell. et Anapsych. Opp. T. I. p. 983. edit. Vallars. Epist. ad Demetriad, T. I. p. 987.

believe, i. e. that as body from body, so soul is derived from soul, subsisting by the same condition with brute animals."

Elsewhere, alluding to the belief "that souls had been in heaven, and, on account of certain ancient transgressions, were condemned to enter human bodies, and that we in this vale of tears are expiating former guilt," Jerome subjoins: "This impious and wicked doctrine was anciently diffused through Egypt and the East, and now prevails in secret, as in vipers' nests, among most, and pollutes the purity of those regions; and as by a hereditary disease glides in the few to pervade the many." Origen even goes so far as to call it the universal belief. Thus commenting on the words, "There was a man sent from God" (John 1: 6), he thinks it implied that the soul of John the Baptist was older than his body, and was sent from a former existence to bear witness to the truth. Apprehensive, however, that on the theory of preëxistence this might with equal reason be said of any other, he adds: "And if the CATHOLIC OPINION hold good concerning the soul, as not propagated with the body, but existing previously, and for various reasons clothed in flesh and blood, this expression "sent from God" will no longer seem extraordinary as applied to John."[1] This statement, though not strictly accurate, is easily excusable, since, although the doctors of the Eastern church did not all of them approve the sentiment, yet neither were there wanting, as will presently appear, those in the Western church to whom it was acceptable.

But inasmuch as they were not agreed either as to the former state or place of souls, or the cause of their incarnation,[2] we shall hereafter show what on these points were the particular

[1] To. II. Comment. in Ioann. § 24, p. 82. To. IV. Opp. Edit. de la Rue. Cf. Basnage hist. de l'Englise, To. I. p. 595.

[2] That many opinions on that point had obtained, and from the nature of the case could obtain, Origen well saw; thus he says: "But as to the questions of some, whether the soul be derived, or created entirely from nothing; and if derived, how it is made; whether, as some think, its substance is contained *in semine corporali*, and its origin traduced alike with the origin of the body: or whether coming perfected from abroad, it is united to a body already prepared and perfected in the womb (in viscera muliebria); and if so, whether it comes lately created, and then first made, when the body is perceived to be formed, so that the necessity of animating the body might be deemed the cause of its creation; or whether made before, and long ago, it be thought to come for some reason to assume a body; and if so, to know what that reason may be; on these *points* there is need of information."—Opp. To. III. lib. II. in Cant. Cantic. p. 58.

views of individual defenders of the doctrine. This we do not remember to have been deliberately and accurately performed by any; for, although there are not wanting those[1] who have, incidentally, rather than *ex professo*, collected various testimonies of ecclesiastical writers; yet they have neither enumerated them all, nor stated fully and accurately the sentiments of each.

Here, however, since we are concerned with the doctors of the orthodox church only, we will not delay upon the Gnostics, and other heretics, some of whom evidently supported this opinion, as they taught that human souls (which they either deduced from the Divine essence itself, and therefore called Divine,[2] or judged at least to have been created by God pure from the beginning[3]), had been sent into bodies as a punishment of an ill-spent former life,[4] or inflamed by some desire, had descended into them of their own accord.[5]

The first among the orthodox Fathers of the church to be reckoned among the defenders of this sentiment, is JUSTIN

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[1] Leo Allatius in Nott. ad Methodii Sympos. p. 96. edit. Fabric. in Hippolyti Opp. T. II. — Huetius in Origen l. II. c. II. qu. VI. § 10, p. 180, Vol. IV. Opp. Origenis edit. de la Rue. — Et — Henr. Morus in Præf. ad Opp. Phil. § XVI. p. 11 seq.

[2] Which opinion Clemens Alexandrinus attributes (Strom. lib. III. § 13. p. 553, ed. Pott.) to Julius Cassian, and to Priscillian; as likewise does Jerome in the passage above cited. Augustine, also, in lib. de haeres. c. 70.

[3] Which was the opinion of Bardesanes, as appears from Origen, dial. de rect. in Deum fide sect. III. Opp. T. I. p. 834.

[4] Among whom Basilides stands first, of whom Clemens Alexandrinus (Strom. lib. IV. § 12. p. 600) has these words: "The hypothesis of Basilides is, that the soul sinned before in another life, and awaits its punishment here; the elect, honorably by martyrdom, others, being purified by appropriate punishment." — Also Bardesanes, whose opinion, as given by Origen in the passage last cited, Marinus thus expounds in Bardesanes' own manner: "When the soul sinning, transgressed the command of God, then, he says, God made coats of skins, i. e. the body, and clothed them." Hence the opinion of this man is evident. Whatever may be necessary for its more accurate determination, Mosheim has observed in Comment. de rebus Christ. ante Constant. M. p. 396 seq. With which deserves to be compared Chr. Guil. Franc. Walchius in Histor. haeres. Vol. I. p. 418. But whether the same was held by Priscillian it seems impossible from the testimonies of the ancients respecting him to determine with certainty. Consult Walchius, as above, Vol. III. p. 462 seq.

[5] That this was the opinion of Julius Cassian, Clemens Alexandrinus expressly testifies in the passage cited above, as follows: "This illustrious hyper-Platonist thinks that the soul being divine above, having become effeminate by lust, came hither to birth and corruption."

MARTYR,[1] although he advocated metempsychosis rather than preëxistence. For in a certain passage[2] he distinctly speaks of the soul's inhabiting a human body more than once, and denies that, on being a second time in a man, it can remember to have ever seen God in human form. Afterwards, he says, souls judged unworthy to see God, are joined to bodies of wild beasts, and thus openly defends[3] the passage of the same soul through different bodies.

On the other hand, it does not appear whether with equal justice CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS can be reckoned with the defenders of this sentiment, although he is wont to be, by most, confidently enough included among them. For if confidence were to be reposed in the prophetic Eclogues commonly attributed to him, he ought rather to be placed in the number of its adversaries. Indeed, in these he expressly denies that men have existed prior to birth, and this he argues from the fact that they retain no memory of a past career. "God made us," he says, "not previously existing. For we ought to know where we were before, if we were before, and how and why we came hither."[4]

But the authority of Photius intervenes, who declares that in the lost work, Hypotyposeon, he taught metempsychosis, "telling wonderful stories about metempsychosis, and many worlds before Adam."[5]

But as this cannot be conveniently understood as referring to a proper transmigration of one soul through various bodies, since it is scarcely credible that he taught this, it seems proper as Münscher rightly conjectured,[6] to understand it altogether of the descent of souls from celestial regions into bodies. And that he so shaped it to himself may be understood from his remaining

[1] Which Jo. Frid. Gruner already has seen in Institut. Theolog. dogmat. § CLI. schol. 1, p. 185.

[2] Dial. c. Tryph. § 4, p. 106. Edit. Opp. Maran.

[3] Which is evident from his arguments on his next page, concerning souls migrating into swine, serpents, or dogs. Wherefore, we greatly wonder that this writer has not been reckoned among the defenders of metempsychosis by any so far as we know, not even by the most recent historian of that opinion, C. Ph. Conzius. (whose work is said to be published without the author's name, under the title: *Schicksale der Seelenwanderungshypothese unter verschiedenen Völkern und in Verschiedenen Zeiten*, *Koningsberg*, 1791.

[4] § XVII. p. 993. [5] Cod. CIX.

[6] In Handb. der christl. Dogmengesch, Vol. II. p. 70.

works, if not with certainty, at least with much apparent probability.

For he denies that the rational soul (*ψυχὴν λογικήν*) any more than the animal soul (*ψυχὴν σωματικήν*) is generated per seminis dejectionem, and says that it was introduced into man before the latter. "The soul," he says, "is sent in, and the superior principle by which we reason is sent in before, not being generated *κατὰ τὴν τοῦ σπέρματος καταβολήν*.[1] What he here meant by this sending in of the animal soul, may perhaps be understood from the following passage: *ἔλαχεν προσβύτης ζῶον εἶναι τὸ κατὰ γαστρός. εἰσιοῦσαν γὰρ τὴν ψυχὴν εἰς τὴν μήτραν ἀπὸ τῆς καθάρσεως ἠτιμασμένην εἰς σύλληψιν, καὶ εἰσκυθεῖσαν ὑπό τινος τῶν τῇ γενέσει ἐφεστώτων ἀγγέλων, παραγινώσκοντος τὸν καιρὸν τῆς συλλήψεως, κινεῖν πρὸς συνουσίαν τὴν γυναῖκα. καταβληθέντος δὲ τοῦ σπέρματος ὡς εἰπεῖν, ἐξοικειοῦσθαι τὸ ἐν τῷ σπέρματι πνεῦμα καὶ οὕτως συλλαμβάνεσθαι τῇ πλάσει.*[2]

But whence the rational soul comes, and by whom it is sent into man, may be gathered from another place, where he says that the soul is sent from heaven by God, not to suffer a wretched fate, but rather with the design, that, having rightly lived, it may again exchange earth for heaven. "The soul is not, therefore, sent down from heaven for the worse. For God worketh all things towards that which is better. But the soul that leads the best life for God and righteousness, exchanges earth for heaven."[3]

Hence, also, he elsewhere speaks of a kind of ingress of men into the world, thus, speaking of the body: "It is a form thrown about us externally, the garb of our entrée into the world that we may be able to enter into this common school-room."[4]

Next after Clement, ARNOBIUS is to be numbered among the defenders of this sentiment. Thus, in speaking of God, he distinctly says: "Do we not all owe to Him this first, that we exist? that we are said to be men? that, sent by him, or fallen by our own blindness, we are held in these corporeal bonds?"[5] In these words, however, it must be confessed, he seems to utter

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[1] Strom. lib. VI. § 16. p. 808. [2] Eclog. prophet. § 50. p. 1001.

[3] Strom. lib. IV. § 26. p. 640. I wonder that these words should have seemed to Münscher to oppose the doctrine which they directly confirm.

[4] Libr. quis. div. salvet. § 33. p. 954. I willingly concede that this language does not *necessarily* imply preëxistence, as Combessius has shown in Nott. ad h. l.

[5] Adv. gent. lib. I. § 29. p. 17. edit. Oberth.

the sentiment of his times rather than his own. For he himself was so far from teaching that human souls were created by God, and sent into this world, that he strongly opposes the idea: "Far from us be the wildness of this wicked opinion, that God omnipotent, maker, founder, and procreator of great and invisible realms, has produced such mobile souls, destitute of gravity, and weight, and constancy; liable to vice, prone to every species of sins, and knowing them to be such, has commanded them to enter bodies, imprisoned in which they should live under the storms and tempests of daily life, and do and suffer things base and obscene.[1] Indeed, he does not lack much of teaching that they are created by inferior spirits. "Moreover," says he, "we see men, that is, souls themselves (for what are men but souls confined in bodies), by the unaccountable fury of their vices, judge themselves to be of no patrician race, but procreated of intermediate families"[2] (ex mediocribus familiis procreatos). Again: "And, even though these things be not, and there be some other way, other cause, other reason, in fine, some other power unheard of by us, and of unknown name, which made the race of man, and connected it with the constitution of things, is it not better to admit that thus men came to be, than to refer to God the responsibility of their original nativity?"[3]

One point, however, he invariably lays down, namely, that souls had existed before they came into this world.

A far nobler advocate of this opinion, yea, noblest of all, was Origen, who, on this very account, has heretofore incurred the criminations of numbers,[4] though, as we shall abundantly show, he was neither its first nor sole defender.

He taught that souls, which were all originally created by God minds of the same kind and condition, so exercised that freedom of the will with which he endowed them, that some of them exerted it wisely and well, while others abused it, though in different degrees, lighter or more grave. "Since he himself was cause of all who were to be created, in whom is no variableness, nor mutation, nor inability, he therefore created equal and similar all whom he did create, simply because there existed in him no cause of variety or diversity. But since rational crea-

[1] Opp. Lib. II. § 37. sqq. p. 73. Ed. § 45. p. 78. [2] Ib. § 48. p. 81.
[3] Ib. § 52. p. 84.
[4] Whose names Huetius has diligently collected. Origen, lib. II. c. II. qu. VI. § 6. p. 179. ed. de la Rue. Compare Walch, Hist. haeres. Vol. VII. p. 691.

tures themselves, as we have often showed, were endowed with the faculty of will, each either exerted his voluntary liberty in progress by imitation of God, or drew it into defection by neglect."[1] And the latter of these, from this very circumstance, that they fell away from that state of rectitude, and, as it were, grew cold, he said were termed ψυχάς. "It should be asked," he says, "whether the very name of the soul, ψυχή, may not have been spoken of its refrigeration from a better and diviner state, and derived thus that it may be seen to have cooled down from that natural and divine warmth, and thus reached its present state and designation."[2]

These souls, however, are not at present all of one and the same nature, but some have retained more than others, of their pristine condition. "Wherefore, this departure and degeneracy of mind is not equally perceptible in all. Some souls preserve something of pristine vigor, others little or nothing. Hence some are found in the very commencement of life, of an ardent genius, while others are duller, and some are born most obtuse and wholly unteachable."[3]

These lapsed souls, he taught that God clothed with bodies and sent into this world, both to expiate their temerity, and by a virtuous career to prepare for themselves a better future lot. As, however, their offences were of great variety, so God collocated in this world minds of the utmost diversity, in admirable fellowship. "Thus it followed, that, in proportion as any departed from good, in the same proportion he advanced in evil. Whereby each mind, according to its motions, more or less negligent of good, was led to the opposite of good, i. e. evil. Hence, therefore, the founder of all things himself received the germs and causes of variety and diversity, so that, according to the difference of minds, i. e. of rational creatures (which diversity is to be referred to the cause above mentioned), he might create a various and diversified world."[4] Again: "And here is the cause of the diversity among rational creatures, not in the will or decision of the Creator, but in the freedom of individual liberty. For God justly disposing of his creatures according to their desert, united the diversities of minds in one congruous world, that he might, as it were, adorn his mansion (in which ought to be not only vases of gold and silver, but of wood also

[1] De princ. lib. II. c. 9. § 6. Opp. To. I. p. 99.
[2] Ib. c. 8. § 3. p. 95. [3] Ib. § 4. p. 98. [4] Ib. § 2. p. 97.

and clay, and some to honor and some to dishonor) with these diverse vases, minds or souls. To these causes the world owes its diversity, while Divine providence disposes each according to his tendency, mind and disposition."[1]

Most of these lapsed souls, he held, were confined in human bodies. For, that human bodies become the late habitation of souls long since created, he endeavors to show in many ways, e. g. from the account of Jacob supplanting his brother in the womb, from the sanctification of Jeremiah before birth, and from John the Baptist's leaping in his mother's womb.

Not all, however, were thus imbodied, for he seems to have considered some as changed to angels, attributing the diversity of angelic condition and dignity in like manner, to their previous different style of thought and action. Hence, of those who deny all spiritual natures to be from one and the same Creator, he says: "For they say they see not how it happens that one and the same Creator, with no exciting meritorious cause, should endow some with the prerogative of dominion, and subject others to their sway; award principality to some, to others subjection to rule. All which, I think, is met and refuted by the views above stated, viz. that the cause of diversity and variety in different individuals, is the result of their own activity, ardent or dull, virtuous or vicious, not of the inequality of Providence."[2]

So, also, speaking of celestial beings: "This diversity begins not at creation; but, from preceding causes, each receives official station from the Creator, of different dignity, according to merit. Especially because each, created by God a mind or rational spirit, by its activity of mind and mental faculties, has merited well or ill, and becomes lovely or odious to God."[3] So also, he believed the stars to be inhabited by souls of this description who had been thus at length endowed with celestial bodies."[4] As to those inclosed in human bodies, he thought that the body was accommodated to the disposition and necessities of each.

Hence the differences in external form and in outward circumstances are due to preceding causes. "For if from unknown reasons the soul be already not exactly worthy of being born in an irrational body, nor yet exactly in one purely rational, it is

[1] Opp. To. I. § 6.
[2] Ib. l. 1. § 2. p. 74.
[3] Ib. L. III. c. 2. § 7. p. 99.
[4] Lil. l. c. 7.

furnished with a monstrous body, so that reason cannot be fully developed by one thus born, having a head disproportioned to the rest of the body and much smaller. Another receives a body so as to be a little more rational; and another still more; the nature of the body being fashioned either of a higher or lower grade according to the scope of the reason."[1]

In these bodies, moreover, Origen taught that each enjoyed that lot which most exactly answered to their previous habits. On these the whole earthly condition of man, internal and external, even his whole fate from birth, depend. "It is easy to understand," he says, "that there were before, rational vessels, both clean and unclean, that is, which either had or had not purified themselves; and that hence each vessel, according to its degree of purity or impurity, received its place, region or condition of birth and action in this world. Recognizing and providing for all these things by his wisdom, God disposes everything in the exercise of his judgment with most just retribution, in proportion as he ought to aid or take care of each according to merit."[2] And again: "Thus then, as I may say, out of the clay of the same lump of rational minds, for certain previous reasons, he formed some unto honor, and some unto dishonor."[3] And again: "I think this is a question, how it happens that the human mind is influenced now by the good, now by the evil. The causes of this I suspect to be more ancient than this corporeal birth."[4] In this way alone he thought the justice of God in the different fate of men on earth could be vindicated and defended. "If our course be not marked out according to our works before this life, how is it true that it is not unjust in God that the elder should serve the younger, and be hated, before he had done things deserving of servitude, and of hatred?"[5]

But he held that, when in these bodies they kept themselves free from their contagion, and by the power of reason restrained the turbulent movements of sense and imagination, and the lusts arising from the body, it would come to pass, that, being gradually purified, and freed from the body, they would ascend on high, whence they came, and at last be changed again into minds. "By the fall, and by cooling from a life in the Spirit

[1] Lib. II. contr. Cels. § 33. To. I. Opp. p. 351.
[2] Lib. II. de princip. c. 9. § 8. p. 100.
[3] Lib. III. c. 1. § 21.
[4] Ib. c. 3. § 5. p. 144.
[5] T. II. Comment. in Ioan. § 25. Opp. Vol. IV. p. 85.

came that which is now the soul, which is also capable of a return to her original condition; of which I think the prophet speaks in this: 'Return unto thy rest, O my soul.' So that the whole is this — How the mind became a soul, and how the soul rectified becomes a mind."[1]

Now, although Origen himself incurred the censure of many contemporaneous and subsequent writers, on account of this and other opinions, and excited great prejudice against himself, especially by the view that the sufferings of this life are penal for the sins of a previous; yet there were not wanting after him those who investigated and maintained the doctrine of pre-existence; which in some of them was not strange, as they were his disciples and followers, among whom we mention PIERIUS[2] and PAMPHILUS.[3]

Photius expressly states that Pierius taught with Origen the existence of souls before their bodies: "He fables after the folly of Origen, and the preëxistence of souls."[4] That Pamphilus was of the same opinion is credible from the fact that he was Pierius's pupil. Still more probable is it, as in his Apology for Origen, he not only vindicates him at large from the charge of heresy on account of this opinion, but urges many objections against the other two theories which then obtained, respecting the soul's origin, viz. its creation at the time of the formation of the body, and its propagation per traducem.

Add to this that another unknown defender of Origen and of the doctrine of preëxistence, is represented by Photius (who had read his Apology), as chiefly depending on Pamphilus and Eusebius.

And if this author's Apology were extant, or if that earlier one of Pamphilus remained entire, we should doubtless be able to cite many more among the doctors of the ancient church as defenders of this opinion, since an anonymous writer, published by Lupo with Pamphilus and Eusebius, says that they in their

[1] De princip. l. II. c. 8. § 3. p. 96.

[2] "Pierius, a Presbyter of Alexandria, very learned in the Scriptures, who wrote many discourses and expositions in a neat and simple style." — Mosheim, Vol. I. p. 176. Harper's edition. — Tr.

[3] "Pamphilus established a school at Caesarea in Palestine, and collected a Theological Library which has been of immense service to the Christian world. He composed a biography and vindication of Origen in five books. He suffered martyrdom A. D. 309." — Ib. — Tr.

[4] Cod. CXIX.

Apology employed many quotations from the learned Fathers in favor of preëxistence and the restitution of all things. Photius likewise expressly states that the above-mentioned anonymous apologist, cited in defence of preëxistence, not only the Scriptures but the Fathers. "He confesses preëxistence, fortifying this fable with the voices of Scripture, as he thinks, and of the Fathers."

But, besides these friends and followers of Origen, there were many others who avowed the same opinion, and among them, strange to say, some of his enemies and antagonists. One of the most bitter of these was without doubt METHODIUS, formerly Bishop of Tyre. Yet in two passages in his Feast of the Ten Virgins he is found to advocate the same sentiment with Origen, although he nowhere sanctions Origen's theory, that these souls were sent into bodies as a punishment for sins which they had previously committed.

First, under the figure of a house adjacent to the mountains, he says: "The house resembles the body in a foetal state, and the entrance by a path from the mountains resembles the descent of souls from heaven and lodgement in bodies."[1] Then, elsewhere, having said that men enter the world clothed with a form akin to the Divine wisdom, he adds: "Souls are then entirely perfected by their parent and Creator, when shining in the pure ideal likeness, and in the lineaments of that original God had in view, when he gave them an immortal and incorruptible form, they remain unchangeable."[2]

So, also, JEROME himself, though repeatedly castigating Origen for this view, from certain passages in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Ephesians, has been suspected by Ruffinus of defending the same doctrine.[3] From this, however, he defends himself and retorts the accusation in his Apology against Ruffinus.[4] Without here examining which of these accusations is the more credible, suffice it to say that in this very Apology Jerome confesses that it is not clear to his mind which of all the theories of the soul's origin approximated nearest to the truth. Thus he ingenuously concedes how little reason he had to inveigh bitterly against Origen, who, on grounds which even he

[1] Orat. II. p. 74. Ed. Combesisii, in Auctar. Biblioth. pp. Noviss.
[2] Orat. VI. p. 97.
[3] Invect. Lib. I. § 27. To. II. Opp. Hier. p. 611 seq.
[4] Lib. I. contr. Ruffin. c. 5. p. 476 seq. Lib. II. c. 2 et 4, et Lib. III. c. 8 et 9.

admitted to be weighty enough, preferred the theory of pre-existence. Jerome, however, might easily maintain some kind of preëxistence of souls, even though most hostile to Origen's idea of their penal suffering in the body for former sins; as full well he knew how diverse from this was the opinion of some, that God had confined all the souls previously created in some repository.

In like manner, also, AUGUSTINE, though he unhesitatingly condemned that *penal* notion of Origen,[1] hung in doubt all his life what opinion of the soul's origin to adopt, and even besought Jerome to give him some light on the subject. And, though he seems constantly to have repudiated the idea that souls are sent into the body for punishment, yet he was not wholly opposed to the idea that they had existed before the body. "Let us see then, whether it may not be true (which I certainly think more tolerable to human view), that God created the human soul in those first works when he created all things together, and breathed it in due time into the body formed from clay. Of which body he had already in those simultaneously created things, virtually created the model according to which it should be wrought when fashioned as a human body. Believe we then, if no Scriptural authority, or rational principle contradict, that man was so made on the sixth day, that the causal plan of the human body was created in the elements of the world, and that the soul itself was already created, even as day was founded, and existed latent in the works of God, till by inspiration or breathing in, he inserted it, in its season, into the body formed from clay."[2]

While thus these two distinguished men hesitated which opinion to follow, others nearly contemporary, both Latins and Greeks, decidedly espoused the doctrine of preëxistence. Of the Latins, we mention NEMESIUS and SYNESIUS. Nemesius distinctly says, that he errs from the truth who supposes the soul generated after the body. "If any one, from the fact of the soul's introduction after the formation of the body, supposes that it is produced after the body, he errs from the truth. For neither does Moses say that the soul was then created when it was introduced into the body, nor is it according to

[1] De civ. Dei. Lib. XI. c. 3, et in lib ad Oros. contr. Priscil. et Origen, c. 8. Opp. Tom. VIII. p. 615, ed. Bened. Venet.

[2] Lib. de. Genes. ad. litter. Lib. VII. c. 24. T. III. Opp. p. 222.

reason."[1] He labors to overthrow the opinion that souls are created from time to time by God, or generated one from another.[2] At the same time he also condemns the Origenistic idea of ascent and descent of souls. "The gradation of souls, their ascents and descents, which Origen advocates, in nowise agrees with the Sacred Scriptures, nor with the received opinions of Christians."[3]

As to Synesius — when the citizens of Ptolemais had invited him to the bishopric among them, he declined that dignity, in a letter to his brother on the subject, for this reason among others, that he cherished certain opinions which perhaps all would not approve, but which he could in no wise abjure, as after mature reflection they had struck their roots deep in his mind. First among these he mentioned the doctrine of preëxistence. "Assuredly I can never think it right to believe the soul an after-birth of the body" (*σώματος ὑστερογενῆ*). Vestiges of this belief are openly discernible in his writings, as, for example, in the hymn of which the following is a paraphrase:

"Eternal Mind, thy seedling spark
Through this thin vase of clay,
Athwart the waves of chaos dark
Emits a timorous ray!

This mind-enfolding soul is sown,
Incarnate germ, in earth;
In pity, blessed Lord, then own
What claims in thee its birth!

Far forth from THEE, thou central fire,
To earth's sad bondage cast,
Let not the trembling spark expire
Absorb thine own at last!"[4]

Among the Latins, HILARIUS stands foremost. He believes that the soul of Adam at least, was created long before his body,

[1] Lib. de. nat. hom. c. 2. p. 73. edit. Felli.

[2] Ibid. cod. cap. p. 74 seq.

[3] Ibid. p. 106.

[4] "*Σὸν σπέρμα φέρω,*
Εὐηγενίος
Σπινθῆρα νόου,
Ἐς βάθος ὕλας
Κατακεκλημένον.
Σὺ γὰρ ἐν κόσμῳ
Κατέθου ψυχήν
Διὰ δὲ ψυχᾶς
Ἐν σώματι νοῦν
Ἔσπειρας, ἄναξ,
Τὸν σὸν κούραν
Ἐλέαιρε μάκαρ.
Κατέβαν ἀπὸ σοῦ
Χθονὶ θρῃεῦσα."

and introduced therein by the Divine afflatus. "When, the world being finished, he would begin his fairest work, and make man in his own image, he composed him of a lowly and of a celestial nature, that is, of body and of soul. And first, he made the soul by that Divine and to us incomprehensible exercise of his energy. For it was not when he made man in the image of God, that the body was created. Genesis teaches that it was long after man was made in the image of God, that the body formed of dust was by the inspiration of God made a living soul, and this terrestrial and celestial nature conjoined as by a kind of covenant of inspiration.[1] From this Divine afflatus he believed that all souls of mankind were undoubtedly derived, and sent into their respective bodies. "Whoever teaches that the soul perishes with the body, let him hear that the soul is not terrestrial, but sprung from the afflatus of God, and mixed with the elements of the body, and that death is not her destruction, but her departure from the body."[2] Hence it is easy to understand in what sense and why he thought the soul of each man could be termed the work of God. "As though, indeed," he says, speaking of Christ, "if he but assumed a body of the virgin, he must also assume a soul of the same; whereas the soul is the work of God, but the flesh is always begotten of flesh."[3]

With Hilarius is to be joined PRUDENTIUS, who entertained nearly the same idea as Origen of the soul's descent from higher seats to earth, for probation under exile, as appears in the following hymn:

"Behold to all believing souls how wide
With amaranthine bowers smiling,
The guarded gates of Paradise divide,
No serpent there fair Eve beguiling.

O Saviour, bid my soul, thy trembling spouse,
Return at last to thee believing,
Bind, bind anew those all unearthly vows
She broke on high, and wandered grieving!"[4]

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[1] Enarr. in Ps. CXXIX. p. 1038. edit. Par. 1652.

[2] Enarr. in Ps. LXIII. p. 774.

[3] L. X. de Trinit. p. 224.

[4] "Patet ecce fidelibus ampli
Via lucida jam Paradisi,
Licet et nemus illud adire,
Homini, quod ademerat anguis:
Illic precor, optime Ductor,
Famulam tibi præcipe mentem,
Genitali in fœdo sacrari,
Quam liquerat exul et errans."
Cathem. Hymn. X. 161 *seq.*

After their day, it is not wonderful that we find no others maintaining this doctrine, since, about that time, that which had never before been settled by any ecclesiastical decision,[1] viz. that souls are not created before the body, seems to have generally been taken for granted as by common consent. Thus LEO THE GREAT, in his letter to the Bishop Asterigensis, says: "The Catholic faith constantly and truly affirms that human souls did not exist before they were breathed into their bodies."

So JUSTINIAN observes: "The Church, following the Holy Word, teaches that the soul is concreated with the body; and not one before, the other after, according to the madness of Origen." Nevertheless, the testimony of GREGORY THE GREAT plainly refutes both statements as quoted by Huetius to the effect that, in his times, at least, it had never been decided by the Church which opinion should be deemed certain and sound.

If we inquire after the fountain whence this opinion of the early church writers flowed, it is not strange that most who have mentioned the subject have referred it to Platonic Philosophy, as it is notorious that this idea was advocated by Plato.[2] But, although these writers clearly allude to this fact, yet we can by no means say that they were influenced by the authority of Plato to adopt this sentiment, or that, smitten with undue fondness for his philosophy, they unconsciously imbibed it, but we believe they embraced it from arguments drawn from another source, and swayed by other authority. We certainly cannot persuade ourselves that CLEMENT of Alexandria would have stigmatized the opinion of Julius Cassian (viz. that human souls emanating from the Divine substance descended to enter bodies inflamed by some desire), as redolent of the Platonic school, when he himself, as has been shown, held a kindred opinion, unless he had well known that his own opinion was not only somewhat different from Cassian's, but derived by himself from some other fount than the Platonic philosophy. Origen, also, when, by means of this sentiment of Plato, he repelled an attack of Celsus, that most insane foe of Christianity, upon Jesus its author, expressly allowed that he was disputing with him on his own ground, and employing the views of Plato and

[1] Huetius as above cited, § XI. et XII.

[2] Brucker Hist. crit. Phil. T. II. p. 415 seq. et Hist. de Ideis. Sect. 1. § 6. p. 102 seq. Tennemann in System der Platon. Philos. Vol. III. p. 95 seq.

other Gentile authors of great authority with his opponent: "And I will say, as against the Greeks, and especially Celsus, sane or not, — except when he quotes from Plato — does, then, he who sends souls into human bodies, drive to the basest of births one that dared so much, taught so much, and by his cleansing for sin converted so many men, not even introducing him to life by legitimate nuptials? Or is it more reasonable (and I speak these things now after Pythagoras, and Plato, and Empedocles, so often named by Celsus), that each soul, being for reasons unrevealed sent into a body, should be sent according to merit, and former behavior?"[1]

But when he states the opinion on his own behalf, he employs in confirmation far other arguments, partly derived from the words and examples of Scripture, partly from other sources; as, for example, in the passage before cited, that the doctrine is necessary to the vindication of the justice of God in the diverse fate of men. So the other defenders of the doctrine thought it confirmed by Scripture authority, and after that (according to their usual course of reasoning), by other arguments from reason, or implied in other points of Christian doctrine.

That this so happened was undoubtedly because this doctrine, with others, had been early derived from the Jewish theology to the Christian. Hence it was handed down from one teacher to another, as an opinion pertaining to the doctrines of religion, yet so that (as was requisite with other opinions), it might be variously stated, and more or less richly developed, and diligently adorned by different authors, or even assume a different form. The doctrine of preëxistence was held by the Jews both before and contemporary with Christ and the Apostles. This, though often proved,[2] we will briefly show according to our proposed design. And as we purpose (what all do not practise) a careful discrimination of arguments, we cannot take sides with those who, from certain passages of the Old Testament, have conceived that the most ancient Hebrews believed that the souls of men, previous to their union with bodies, were kept in the same subterranean locality, named שְׁאוֹל (sheol), into which they returned after death.[3] The arguments they adduce in favor

[1] Lib. I. contr. Cels. § 32. To. I. Opp. p. 350 seq.

[2] Chr. Guil. Flügge, in Geschichte des Glaubens an Unsterblichkeit, Auferstehung, Gericht und Vergeltung, To. I. p. 45 seq.

[3] Among whom are J. D. Michaelis in Annot. ad vers. germ. Joh. I. 21. p. 4,

of this idea, from these passages, are too precarious and inconclusive.

First, then, as to the passage, Job 1: 21, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither." It is manifest that their interpretation is embarrassed, in attempting to elicit this meaning. They say that the words אָשׁוּב שָׁמָּה (shall I return thither), are to be closely linked with the preceding יָצָתִי מִבֶּטֶן אִמִּי (came I out of my mother's womb), and so understood as to refer in the word שָׁמָּה, (thither), to the mother's womb, though not literally, as in the former clause, but figuratively, as of the bowels of the earth.

But to say nothing of the harshness of this twofold use, now literal, now figurative, of this one word in the same sentence, who does not see that, even granting this explanation, we do not escape a palpable ambiguity (dilogiam)? Now Job says, he came forth out of his mother's womb; now, out of the bosom of the earth. But since it is manifest from 3: 17, 19, "THERE the wicked cease from troubling; THERE the weary are at rest;" "The small and great are THERE, and the servant is free from his master,"— that the author of this book employs the word שָׁם (THERE), as if by emphasis of that place whither all the dead depart,[1] why not admit the same signification here?

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et Ps. cxxxix. 15, p. 247, and Hezelius in Nott. on the same passages, Oper. bibl. Vol. III. p. 476, et Vol. IV. p. 499, and many other places. Also Knapp and Müntinghe in Nott. on same Psalm. Geo. Thom. Serzius (scholæ Laur. Norimb. hodie Rect. linguaeque ebr. et graec. Prof. P.) assailed this view in a separate treatise, published Norimb. 1792–4, in which, as its title states, he demonstrates that the figment of the soul's subterranean existence, previous to its union with the body, was falsely ascribed to the Hebrews. Nevertheless, Ammonius expressly declares himself unconvinced by said work of the falsity of said opinion, Comment. de Orco Hebraeorum, Erlang. 1792–4. Also Pauli Memorabil. Vol. IV. p. 195 seq. Moreover, Joh. Car. Henr. a Zobel wrote a distinct work against him, entitled: "Etwas über das Schattenreich der alten Ebräer und einer doppelten sich scheinbar widersprechenden Deutung desselben," Wittenb. 1796–8. Against whom see an anonymous writer, A. L. Z., in Ephem. litter. univ. 1806. No. 125. et Tubing. 1807. No. 56 et 57. Still Bauer, Prof. Altorf., wrote more doubtfully in his Theologie des A. T. oder Abriss der religiösen Begriffe der. alt. Hebr. § 112. p. 245, with which compare the same learned author's Dicta Classica, Vol. V. Sect. I. § 32. p. 129. Much more openly of late Jo. Fr. Wagner defends the same opinion in his Attempts at a new interpretation of Biblical passages, Ps. 22: 30 and 1 Peter 3: 18. Lunaeb. 1801–4. p. 3.

[1] As Serzius has well showed on p. 20 of the work alluded to above, and which seems to us far preferable to the suggestion of Hufnagel in vers. hujus libri germ., p. 5, who refers this word to שַׁח and explains it as if Job had said he was about to go where his mother was, i. e. to die.

And the verb שׁוּב instead of denoting a return to a former locality, should rather, in our view, be opposed to יָצָא, so as to denote simply departure from that earth which had been entered by birth. This view is clearly sustained by a parallel passage, Eccl. 5: 14, where the same sentiment is expressed in these words: כַּאֲשֶׁר יָצָא מִבֶּטֶן אִמּוֹ עָרוֹם יָשׁוּב לָלֶכֶת כְּבוֹאוֹ, "As he came forth out of his mother's womb naked shall he return to go as he came," a passage which Hezelius, without reason, insists on understanding of the return of man to the realms below from whence he came.[1]

Another passage from which the same sentiment is thought to follow is Ps. 139: 15, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." But as this relates not to the formation of the human soul, but of the body, speaking particularly of the bones, it is self-evident that the words תַּחְתִּיּוֹת אֶרֶץ (lower parts of the earth), cannot possibly be understood as they desire, of the nether world or SHEOL. The poet does not affirm himself to have been fashioned among the inhabitants of the nether world, but in his mother's womb (v. 13). And, that this is the same with "the lowest parts of the earth," we cannot believe, since it is incredible that the maternal womb could be denoted by the name of a subterranean place.[2] Therefore, with Kopp,[3] we think those words (תַּחְתִּיּוֹת אֶרֶץ) are to be understood of *the deepest recesses of the earth*, as in all those places where this formula is used of the Hebrew Sheol, since it is well known to all that they regarded that as subterranean. We think that they are to be thus referred, because it is the constant tradition of Hebrew writings that the body of man is formed of clay or of dust. Hence man might be poetically said to be formed, as it were, in the lower parts of the earth from which according to this opinion the elementary principles of his body are derived.

Besides these passages, quoted by all the advocates of this opinion, Hezelius[4] and Zobelius[5] also instance the following: Job 21: 13, "They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment they go down to Sheol." 30: 23, "For I know that thou wilt

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[1] Oper. bibl. Vol. V. p. 232.

[2] As Dathius, in his notes to the Latin version, Serrius, in the work already mentioned, and many others, have shown.

[3] Notes on Eph. 4: 9. p. 75 seq. Ed. 11.

[4] Not. ad Ps. 139: 15. Opur. bibl. Vol. IV. p. 499. [5] Before cited, p. 24 seq.

return me to death and to the house appointed for all the living." Ps. 9: 13, 19, "When he maketh inquisition for blood he remembereth them, He forgetteth not the cry of the humble." "The wicked shall be *returned* into Sheol, and all the nations that forget God." These, however, in our judgment, are exposed to still more serious objections. And, unless better proof of this opinion having been held by the Hebrews can be adduced, all things considered, we cannot be convinced of that fact, although our narrow limits forbid a particular examination of these passages.

On the other hand, the evidence is much less doubtful, that the doctrine of preëxistence was held by the later Jews, living after the times of the Babylonish captivity. And first, we mention the passage in the apocryphal book of Wisdom, 8: 20, where the author introduces Solomon as saying: *παῖς ἤμην εὐφυής, ψυχῆς τε ἔλαχον ἀγαθῆς, μᾶλλον δὲ ἀγαθὸς ὢν ἦλθον εἰς σῶμα ἀμίαντον*, "I was an ingenuous child, and received a good soul; nay more, being good, I came into a body undefiled." Here he plainly means to say, that he was a child of good disposition for two reasons, not only because he was born a good soul, but what is more (*μᾶλλον δὲ*) that, on account of this very goodness of soul, he was sent into a body exempt from every defect. And in 15: 11, the author of the same book clearly distinguishes the soul (*ψυχήν*) from the spirit of life (*πνεύματι ζωτικῷ*) by saying that God breathed into man the energizing soul (*ψυχὴν ἐνεργοῦσαν*) and engendered in him the spirit of life (*πνεῦμα ζωτικόν*). Thus does he openly reveal the belief of the soul's preëxistence.[1] Some, indeed, are unwilling to recognize this meaning, and propose to interpret the words thus: "I was a child well-formed by nature, and endowed with a good soul, and being well-educated I came to an undefiled body," which explanation even Luther[2] has followed in his version. Yet it is evident that neither the principles of the language, nor the context, will admit of this construction. For who does not see that *ἀγαθὸς ὤν* can no more be understood of education, than *ἦλθον εἰς σῶμα ἀμίαντον* can be understood: "I came to a body not corrupted," i. e. I preserved my body from the contagion of all iniquity, a style of speaking

[1] This was seen by Grotius and Brucker in Miscell. histor. philos. p. 124 seq., and others; and is recognized by the latest interpreters of this book, Hassius and Nachtigall; also by Eichhorn, Introd. in V. T. apochryph. p. 113, and Bauer, Theol. V. T. Apoc. p. 247.

[2] We are surprised also to see that Flügge has lately approved the same.

savoring rather of German than Greek idiom. And from the context it is evident that the writer cannot here mean to say that Solomon had studied to preserve himself pure from sin, from childhood, since he goes on to show how he asked of God wisdom, as mistress of all virtues; but here his only object was to show how it happened that he had always been so very desirous (as he had said in v. 19), of obtaining that wisdom.

But much clearer traces of the prevalence of this opinion among the Jews are found in the doctrines of the Essenes, among which Josephus expressly mentions the preëxistence of souls. Thus: "For the opinion obtains among them, that bodies indeed are corruptible, and the matter of them not permanent; but that souls continue exempt from death forever; and that, emanating from the most subtle ether, they are enfolded in bodies, as prisons, to which they are drawn by some natural spell. But, when loosed from the bonds of the flesh, as if released from a long captivity, they rejoice, and are borne upward."[1]

But it was not merely among the members and friends of this sect that this opinion prevailed. It was so prevalent among the common people as to influence the common judgments of every-day life. Of this there is clear evidence in the Gospel of John, 9: 3. Here, when seeing a man blind from birth, the disciples asked Jesus which did sin, he or his parents, that he should be born blind, they did not, as many have supposed,[2] think of the transmigration of souls through several bodies, but manifestly assumed their preëxistence before birth.[3] Not to mention more recent interpreters, CYRILL of Alexandria thus recognizes here the traces of this doctrine: "The disciples, affected with vulgar, native ignorance of things rightly taught by us, believed that

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[1] De Bell. Jud. B. II. c. 8. § 11.

[2] Besides others who have opposed this idea, Frid. Guel. Sartor has assailed it in a separate treatise entitled: Critical Commentary on the Pythagoric Metempsychosis not a doctrine of Christ's disciples and the Jewish nation before the second destruction of Jerusalem, in illustration of Matt. 14: 2. 16: 14. Job 9: 2. Wisdom 8: 19, 20.

[3] Some do not concede this, preferring, with Lightfoot Hor. Heb. and the Talmud, to explain it by that Jewish notion which we think lacks confirmation, that infants can commit sin even in the womb of their mother. This course has been embraced by J. D. Michaelis and Sam. Gottl. Lange among late interpreters. See further on this point, Thom. Ittigius Dissert. in his Exercit. Ennead. p. 109 seq.

the souls of men preëxisted and lived before the formation of the body, and that, having voluntarily transgressed before the body, they were at length united to it, receiving birth in the flesh in the form of punishment."[1]

ISIDORE, also, of Pelusium, accounts for this question of the disciples from their holding with the Greeks, "that the soul had sinned, and therefore was sent into the body to be punished."[2] And, as in the passage in the book of Wisdom, it appears that souls previously innocent, were supposed to be sent into bodies, pure and free from every defect; so from this, on the contrary, it seemed that those who had defiled themselves by some sin, were believed to be assigned to bodies deformed and burdened with defects. This persuasion appears, also, in the objurgation of the rulers of the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem, imbued with the doctrines of the Pharisees, in reply to what they regarded the insolence of the blind man, viz. *ἐν ἁμαρτίαις σὺ ἐγεννήθης ὅλος;*" — "Thou wast altogether born in sins."[3]

Much clearer and ampler testimony to the prevalence of this opinion among the Jews of that day, is found in the writings of Philo. In more than one passage, he distinctly teaches that two kinds of souls inhabit the air. "The Maker made two races in earth and air. In the air are the visible birds, and other powers in nowise cognizable to sense. This company of disembodied souls is distributed in different orders. The law of some of them is to enter mortal bodies, and, after certain prescribed periods, be again set free. But those possessed of a diviner structure are absolved from all local bonds of earth."[4] Hence he terms the air *ψυχῶν ἀσωμάτων οἶκος*, "the home of unbodied souls."[5]

Of these souls, some are attracted to earth by the desire of inhabiting bodies: "Some of these souls enter to be confined in mortal bodies, because they are earthly and corporeally inclined. Others depart, being released again according to supernaturally determined times and seasons."[6] Others are influenced by the desire of learning, and of employment: "Therefore, all such as are wise, like Moses, are living abroad from home. For the

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[1] Comment. in Joh. l. VI. c. 1. To. IV. Opp. p. 588. ed. Paris,

[2] Epist. l. II. ep. 272. p. 244. ed. Morell.

[3] Evidently implying that *they* were *not* born in sins, but, like Solomon, pure. — Tr.

[4] Libr. de plant. Opp. To. III. p. 92. ed. Pfeiff.

[5] Lib. I. de Somn. To. V. p. 62.

[6] Ib. p. seq.

souls of such formerly chose this expatriation from heaven. And, through curiosity and the desire of acquiring knowledge, they came to dwell abroad in an earthly nature. And, while they dwell in the body, they look down on things visible and mortal around them, and urge their way thitherward again whence they came originally; and call that heavenly region in which is their citizenship, father-land, but this earthly, in which they live, foreign.[1] Descending thus from heaven, and entering human bodies, Philo teaches that, from time to time, they take flight from them, yet so that they return to them after an interval, though some leave them permanently. "Some of these souls, attached to the manners and habits of this mortal life, afterwards revert to them. But those that have discovered its great vanity, regard the body as a prison and a sepulchre, and fly from it as from imprisonment or sepulture; and, borne aloft on bouyant wing through the air, they dwell on high forever."[2] This connection with bodies he often refers to God as cause, and thus speaks of them as sent into the world. Thus, speaking of Adam, Gen. 2: 7: "That which he breathed in, was nothing else than a godlike spirit from that happy and blessed nature sent hither from its home, for the purpose of introducing our species by birth," "*ἐπ' ὠφελείᾳ τοῦ γένους ἡμῶν.*" He thought that God not only permitted such connection with the body; but encouraged it by the hope of a return after death to their primeval state. Thus, discoursing upon Gen. 28: 15: "Behold I am with thee in all places whithersoever thou goest, and will keep thee, *and bring thee again into this land*," he says: "Beautifully is it said — 'I will bring thee again into this land.' For it was well that the rational principle, existing by him, should not dwell abroad in sense, but journeying again should return unto him. And probably the doctrine of the soul's immortality is shadowed forth by these things. For having left the celestial region, as is

[1] Libr. de confus. ling. Vol. III. p. 349: "*ἐπειδὰν οὖν ἐνδιατρίψασι σώμασι, τὰ αἰσθητὰ καὶ θνητὰ δι' αὐτῶν πάντα κατίδωσιν, ἐπανέρχονται ἐκεῖσε πάλιν ὅθεν ὡρμήθησαν τὸ πρῶτον, πατρίδα μὲν τὸν οὐράνιον χῶρον ἐν ᾧ πολιτεύονται, ξένον δὲ τὸν περίγειον, ἐν ᾧ παροίκησαν, νομίζουσαι.*" [Compare 2 Cor. 5: 6: "*ἐνδημοῦντες ἐν τῷ σώματι ἐκδημοῦμεν ἀπὸ τοῦ Κυρίου.*" Phil. 3: 20: "*ἡμῶν γὰρ τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς ὑπάρχει.*" Also Heb. 11: 13: "*ὁμολογήσαντες ὅτι ξένοι καὶ παρεπίδημοί εἰσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. Οἱ γὰρ τοιαῦτα λέγοντες ἐμφανίζουσιν ὅτι πατρίδα ἐπιζητοῦσι. . . . νῦν δὲ κρείττονος (πατρίδος) ὀρέγονται, τοῦτ' ἐστιν ἐπουρανίου.*" — Tr.]

[2] Same as in note 5, p. 176; also libr. de gigant. Vol. II. p. 360 seq.

said a little before, she came into the body, as into a foreign country. And he said that the father who begat her, would not forever overlook her in bondage, but, taking pity, would loose her chains, and send her safely in freedom to her mother city, and not leave her till the promises of the word of truth were confirmed in deeds."[1]

Hence, moreover, he calls death a return into a place previously forsaken. Abraham learned, he says, from Wisdom, "to think death, not the extinction of the soul, but a separation, and unyoking from the body, in departing whence it came."[2] Another class of souls, however, he taught, inhabiting the highest ether, preserved themselves free from all corporeal contagion, being called in the sacred writings by the name of angels. "In the highest regions of air, are those that are purest, which the Greek philosophers call heroes. Moses, however, employing a happy word, calls them angels."[3] And again: "Others are purest and best, endowed with greater and diviner mental faculties, nevermore desiring aught earthly, and, ministers of the Supreme, as though they were the eyes and ears of the Great King, they oversee and hear all things."[4] These, using respectively the phraseology natural to them, the philosophers call demons; and the sacred Scriptures, angels." In view of these facts, it is unnecessary to subjoin the views of the later Jews and Cabalists on this point. It is, indeed, true that they professed this same opinion of preëxistence and developed it more at large. They taught that all and several human souls that were to be born afterward had been created together by God, at the beginning of the world, and preserved in some place, named Goph, until they all should have issued forth to the upper air, which occurring, and the propagation of the species failing, Messiah would come and introduce and establish a new order of things."[5] And as it might be doubted whether their sentiments could be with propriety attributed to the ancient Jews, and as their testimony has already been collected by others, we may here abstain from their further consideration.

[1] Lib. de Somn. p. 80.
[2] Libr. de Abrah. Vol. V. p. 342.
[3] Lib. de plant. Opp. To. III. p. 92.
[4] Lib. de Somn. I. To. V. p. 62.
[5] Those err who with Serzius (before quoted) think this repository of souls alluded to in IV. Esdras 4: 36. The author of the Critical History of Chiliasm, Vol. I. p. 195, well saw that that passage speaks not of a repository of souls not yet joined to bodies, but rather of the receptacle of souls separated from the body, i. e. SHEOL.