

The Sacred Theory of the Earth: Containing an Account of Its Original Creation, and of All the Changes, which it Hath Undergone, Or is to Undergo, Until the Consummation of All Things Volume 2

Pages: 472

Publisher: HardPress (May 26, 2018)

Format: pdf, epub

Language: English

[[DOWNLOAD FULL EBOOK PDF](#)]

The Sacred Theory of the Earth

by Thomas Burnet

Copyright © 2017 by HardPress

Address:

HardPress

8345 NW 66TH ST #2561

MIAMI FL 33166-2626

USA

Email: info@hardpress.net

TO T a E

Q. U E E N's

MOST EXCELLENT

MAJESTY.

M A*D AM,

HAVING had the honour to present the first part of this Theory to your Royal Uncle, I presume to offer the second to your majesty. This part of the subject, I hope, will be no less acceptable, for certainly it is of no less importance. They both indeed agree in this, that there is a World made and destroyed in either treatise. But we are more concerned in what is to come, than what is past. And as the former books represented to us the rise and fall of the first world; so these give an account of the present frame of nature labouring under the last sickness, and of the resurrection of it in the new heavens and new earth; which, according to the divine promises, we are to expect.

Cities that are burnt, are commonly rebuilt more beautiful and regular than they were before. And when this world is demolished by the last fire, he that undertakes to rear it up again, will supply the defects, if there were any, of the former fabric. This theory supposes the present earth to be little better than an heap of ruins; where yet there is room enough for sea and land, for islands and continents, for several countries and dominions: but when these are all melted down, and refined in the general fire, they will be cast into a better mould, and the form and qualities of the earth will become paradisaical.

But, I fear, it may be thought no very

fit proposal to shew your majesty a world laid in ashes, where you have so great an interest yourself, and such fair dominions; and then, to recompense the loss, by giving a reversion in a future earth. But if that future earth be a second paradise, to be enjoyed for a thousand years; with peace, innocency, and constant health; an inheritance there will be an happy exchange for the best

crown in this world. □

I Confess, I could never persuade myself that the kingdom of Christ, and of his saints, which the scripture speaks of so frequently, was designed to be upon this present earth. But however, upon all suppositions, they, that have done some eminent good in this life, will be sharers in the happiness of that state. To humble the oppressors, and rescue the oppressed, is a work of generosity and charity, that cannot want its reward; yet, Madam, they are the greatest benefactors to mankind, that dispose the world to become virtuous; and by their example, influence, and authority, retrieve that Truth and Justice, that have been lost, amongst men, for many ages. The school divines tell us, those, that act or suffer great things for the public good, are distinguished in heaven, by a circle of gold about their heads. One would not willingly vouch for that: but one may safely for what the prophet says, which is far greater; namely, that they shall shine like stars in the firmament, that turn many to righteousness. Which is not to be understood, so much, of the conversion of single souls, as of the turning of nations and people; the turning of the world to righteousness. They, that lead on that great and happy work, shall be distinguished in glory from the rest of mankind.

We are sensible, Madam, from your great example, that piety and virtue, seated upon a throne, draw many to imitation, whom ill principles, or the course of the world, might have led another way. These are the best, as well as easiest victories, that are gained without contest. And as princes are the vice

TO THE

READER.

I HAVE not much to say to the reader in this preface -* to the third part of the theory; seeing it treats upon a subject owned by all, and out of dispute, The Conflagration of the World. The question will be only about the bounds and limits of the conflagration, the causes and the manner *f it. These I have fixed, according to the truest measures I could take from scripture, and from nature. I differ, I believe, from the common sentiment in this, that, in following St. Peter's philosophy, I suppose, that the burning of the earth will be a true liquefaction or dissolution of it, as to the exterior region. And that this lays a foundation for new Heavens and a new Earth; which seems to me as plain * doctrine in Christian religion, as the conflagration itself.

I have endeavoured to propose an intelligible way, whereby the earth may be consumed by fire. But if any one can propose another, more probable, and more consistent, I will be the first man that shall give him thanks for his discovery. He, that loves truth for its own sake, is willing to receive it from any hand; as he that truly loves his country, is glad of a victory over the enemy, whether himself, or any other, has the glory of it. I need not repeat here, what I have already said upon several occasions, that it is the substance of this theory, whether in this part, or in other parts, that I mainly regard and depend upon: being willing to suppose, that many single explications and particularities may be rectified, upon farther thoughts, and clearer light. I know our best writings, in this life, are but essays, -which we leave to posterity to review and correct-. fall of an empire: it is not the fate of any single prince or potentate, that we calculate, but of all mankind; nor of this or that particular kingdom or empire, but of the whole earth. Our enquiries must reach to that great period of nature, when all things are to be dissolved; both human affairs, and the stage whereon they are acted; when the heavens and the earth will pass away, and the elements melt with fervent heat. We desire, if possible, to know what will be the face of that day, that great and terrible day! when the regions of the air will be nothing but mingled flame and smoke, and the habitable earth turned into a sea of molten fire.

As to the style, I always endeavour to express myself in a plain and perspicuous manner; that the

reader may not lose time, nor wait too long, to know my meaning. To give an attendant quick dispatch, is a civility, whether you do his business or no. I would not willingly give any one the trouble of reading a period twice over, to know the sense of it; lest, when he comes to know it, he should not think it a recompence for his pains. Whereas, on the contrary, if you are easy to your reader, he will certainly make you an allowance for it, in his censure.

You must not think it strange however, that the author sometimes, in meditating upon this subject, is warm in his thoughts and expressions. For to see a world perishing in flames, rocks melting, the earth trembling, and an host of angels in the clouds, one must be very much a Stoic, to be a cold and unconcerned spectator of all this. And when we are moved ourselves, our words will have a tincture of those passions which we may feel. Besides, in moral reflexions which are designed for use, there must be some heat, as well as dry reason, to inspire this cold clod of clay, this dull body of earth, which we carry about with us; and you must often pierce that crust, before you can come at the soul. But especially when things future are to be represented, you cannot use too strong colours, if you would give them life, and make them appear present to the mind, Farewell

But we must not leave the world in this disorder and confusion, without examining what will be the issue and consequences of it. Whether this will be the end of all things, and nature, by a final fate, lie eternally dissolved and desolate in this manner: or, whether we may hope for a restoration: New Heavens and a New Earth, which the holy writings make mention of, more pure and perfect than the former. As if this was but as a refiner's fire, to purge out the dross and coarser parts, and then cast the mass again into a new and better mould. These things, with God's assistance, shall be matter of our present enquiry: these make the general subject of this treatise, and of the remaining parts of this Theory of the Earth, which now, you see, begins to be a kind of prophecy or prognostication of things to come, as it hath been hitherto an history of things past; of such states and changes as nature hath already undergone. And if that account which we have given of the origin of the earth, its first and paradisaical form, and the dissolution of it at the universal deluge, appear fair and reasonable; the second dissolution by fire, and the renovation of it out of a second chaos, I hope, will be deduced from as clear grounds and suppositions. And scripture itself will be a more visible guide to us in these following parts of the theory, than it was in the former. In the mean time, I take occasion to declare here again, as I have done heretofore, that neither this, nor any other great revolutions of nature, are brought to pass, but depend purely natural, without the conduct of a particular providence. And it is the sacred books of scripture that are the records of this providence, both as to times past, and times to come; as to all the signal changes, either of the natural world, or of mankind, and the different oeconomies of religion. In which respects, these books, though they did not contain a moral law, would, notwithstanding, be, as the most mystical, so also the most valuable books in the world.

This treatise, you see, will consist of two parts: the former whereof is to give an account of the Conflagration; and the latter of the New Heavens, and New Earth following upon it; together with the state of mankind in those new habitations. As to the conflagration, we first enquire, what the ancients thought concerning the present frame of this world: whether it was to perish or no: whether to be destroyed, or to stand eternally in this posture. Then, in what manner they thought it would be destroyed: by what force or violence: whether by fire or other ways. And with these opinions of the ancients we will compare the doctrine of the prophets and apostles, to discover and confirm the truth of them. In the second place, We will examine, what calculations or conjectures have been made concerning the time of this great catastrophe, or of the end of this world: whether that period be determinable or no; and whether by natural arguments, or by prophecies. Thirdly, We will consider the signs of the approaching conflagration: whether such as will be in nature, or in the state of human affairs; but especially such as are taken notice of, and recorded, in scripture. Fourthly, which is the principal point, and yet that wherein the ancients have been most silent, what causes there are in nature, what preparations for this conflagration: where are these seeds

of this univerfal sire, or fuel sussicient for the nourishing of it. Lastly, In what order, and by what degrees, the conflagration will proceed: in what manner the frame of the earth will be dissolved; and what will be the dreadful countenance of a burning "world.

These heads are set down more sully in the argument of each chapter; and seem to be sussicient for the explication of this whole matter: taking in some additional discourses, which, in pursuing these heads, enter of their own accord, and make the work more even and intire. In the second part, we restore the world that we had destroyed; build new heavens and a new earth, wherein righteoufnefs shall dwell: establish that new order of things, which is so often celebrated by the prophets; a kingdom of peace and of justice, where the enemy of mankind shall be bound, and the prince of peace shall rule. A paradise without a serpent, and a tree of knowlege, not to wound, but to heal the nations: where will be neither curse, nor pain, nor death, nor disease: where all things are new, all things are more perfect, both the world itself, and its inhabitants: where the sirst-born from the dead have the sirst-fruits of glory .

We dote upon this present world, and the enjoyments of it: and it is not without pain, and fear, and reluctancy, that we are torn from them; as if our hopes lay all within the compass of this life. Yet, I know not by what good fate, my thoughts have been always sixed upon things to come, more than upon things present. These I know, by certain experience, to be but trifles; and if there be nothing more considerable to come, the whole being of man is no better than a trisle. But there is room enough before us in that we call eternity, for great and noble scenes; and the mind of man feels itself lessened and straitened in this low and narrow state; wishes and waits to see something greater. And if it could diseern. another world a-coming, on this side eternal life, a beginning glory, the best that earth can bear, it would be a kind of immortality to enjoy that profpect before-hand. To see, when this theatre is dissolved, where we shall act next, and what parts; what saints and heroes, if I may so fay, will appear upon that stage; and with what lustre and excellency r how easy would it be, under a

view of these futurities, to despise the little pomps and honours, and the momentary pleasures of a mortal life! But I proceed to our subject.

C H A P. II.

The true state of the question is proposed.

It is the general doctrine of the ancients, that the present world, or the present frame of nature, is mutable and perifl> able: to -which the sacred books agree; and natural reason can allege nothing against it.' WHEN we speak of the end er destruction of the world, whether fay sire or otherwise, it is not to be imagined that we understand this of the great universe; sun, moon, and stars, an c the highest heavens; as if these were to perish or be destroyed some few years hence, whether by sire or any other way. This question is only to be understood of the sublunary -world, of this earth and its furniture; which had its original about six thousand years ago, according to the history of and hath once already been destroyed, when the exterior region of it bro kt, and the abyss, issuing forth, as out of a womb, overflowed all the habitable earth, Gen. vii. 17. Job xxxviii. 8. The next deluge is that of sire; which will have the fame bounds, and overflow the surface of the earth, much-what in the fame manner. But she celestial regions, where the stars and angels inhabit, are not concerned in this fate: those are not made of com-bustible matter; nor, if they were, could our flames reach them. Possibly those bodies may have changes and revolutions peculiar to themselves, but in ways unknown to us, and after long and unknown periods of time. Therefore when we speak of the conflagration of the world, these have no concern in the question; nor any other part of the universe, than the earth and its de pen-.. Vol. B inced. As will evidently appear when we come to Joplin the manner and causes of the conflagration.

Arid as this conflagration can extend no farther than to the earth and its elements, so neither can it destroy the matter of the earth; but only the form and fashion of it, as it is an habitable world. Neither fire, nor any other natural agent, can destroy matter, that is, reduce it to nothing: it may alter the modes and qualities of it, but the substance will always remain. And accordingly the apostle, when he speaks of the mutability of this world, says only, The figure or fashion of this world passeth away, 1 Cor. vii. 31. This structure of the earth and disposition of the elements; and all the works of the earth, as St. Peter says, 2 Epistle. iii. all its natural productions, and all the works of art or human industry; these will perish, be melted or torn in pieces by the fire; but without an annihilation of the matter, any more than in the former deluge. And this will be farther proved and illustrated in the beginning of the following books. •* The question being thus stated, we are next to consider the sense of antiquity upon these two points: first, Whether this sublunary world is mutable and perishable; secondly, by the force and action of what causes, and in what manner, it will perish; whether by fire, or otherwise. Aristotle is very irregular in his sentiments about the state of the world; he allows it neither beginning nor ending, rise nor fall; but would have it eternal and immutable. And this he understands, not only of the great universe, but of this sublunary world, this earth which we inhabit; wherein he will not admit there ever have been, or ever will be, either general deluges or conflagrations. And, as if he was ambitious to be thought singular in his opinion about the eternity of the world, he says, all the ancients before him gave some beginning or origin to the world; but were not, indeed, so Unanimous as to its future fate: some believing it immutable, or, as the philosophers call it, incorruptible; Others, that it had its fatal times and periods, as lesser bodies have; and a term of age prefixed to it by providence. - ,

But before we examine this point any farther, it will be necessary to reflect upon that which we noted before, an ambiguity in the use of the word world, which gives frequent occasion of mistakes in reading the ancients; when that which they speak of the great universe, we apply to the sublunary world; or, on the contrary, "what they speak of this earth, we extend to the whole universe. And if some of them, besides Aristotle, made the world incorruptible, they might mean that of the great universe, which they thought would never be dissolved or perish as to its mass and bulk : but single parts and points of it (and our earth is no more) may be variously transformed, and made habitable and inhabitable, according to certain periods of time, without any prejudice to their philosophy. So Plato, for instance, thinks this world will have no dissolution: for, being a work so beautiful and noble, the goodness of God, he says, will always preserve it. It is most reasonable to understand this of the great universe; for, in our earth, Plato himself admits such dissolutions as are made by general deluges and conflagrations; and we contend for no other. So likewise in other authors, if they speak of the immortality of the world, you must observe what world they apply it to; and whether to the matter or the form of it: and if you remember that our discourse proceeds only upon the sublunary world, and the dissolution of its form, you will find little in antiquity contrary to this doctrine. I always except Aristotle (who allowed of no providence in this inferior world) and some Pythagoreans falsely so called, being either fictitious authors, or apostates from the doctrine of their master. These being excepted, upon a view of the rest, you will find very few dissenters from this general doctrine.

Plato's argument against the dissolution of the world, from the goodness and wisdom of God, would not be altogether unreasonable, though applied to this earth, if it was so to be dissolved, as never to be restored again, But we expect new heavens and a new earth, upon the dissolution of these; better in all respects, more commodious, and more beautiful. And the several perfections of the divine nature, wisdom, power, goodness, justice, sanctity, cannot be so well displayed, and exemplified in any one single state of nature, as in a succession of states, fitted to receive one another according to the dispositions of the moral world, and the order of divine providence. Wherefore, Plato's argument from the divine attributes, all things considered, doth rather prove a succession of worlds, than that one single world should remain the same throughout all ages, without change or variation. Next to the Platonists, the Stoics were most considerable in matters

relating to morality and providence: and their opinion in this case is well known; the v being looked upon by the moderns, as the principal authors of the doctrine of the Conflagration. Nor is it less known, that the school of Democritus and Epicurus made all their worlds subject to dissolution; and by a new concourse of atoms restored them again. Lastly, The Ionic philosophers, who had Thales for their master, and were the first naturalists amongst the Greeks, taught the same doctrine. We have, indeed, but an imperfect account left us of this sect, and it is great pity; for as it was one of the most ancient, so it seems to have been one of the most considerable amongst the Greeks for natural philosophy. In those remains which Diogenes Laertius hath preserved of Anaxagoras, etc. all great men in their time; we find that they treated much of the origin of the world, and had many extraordinary notions about it, which come lame and defective to us. The doctrine of their founder, Thales, which made all things to consist of water, seems to have a great resemblance to the doctrine of Moses and St. Peter about the constitution of the first heavens and earth, Gen. i. 2 Pet. ii. 5. But there is little in Laertius, what their opinion was about the dissolution of the world; other authors inform us more of that. Eel. Phys. 1. i. c. 24. joins them with and the Epicureans: Simplicity with Heraclitus, and the Stoics, in this doctrine about the corruptibility of the world. So that all the schools of the Greek philosophers, as we noted before, were unanimous in this point, excepting the Peripatetics; whose master, Aristotle, had neither modesty enough to follow the doctrine of his predecessors, nor wit enough to invent any thing better.

Besides these sects of philosophers, there were amongst the Greeks, more ancient than these sects, and more mystical. Aristotle often distinguished the naturalists, and the Off qualm, oi Such were Orpheus and his followers, who had more of the ancient oriental learning, than the succeeding philosophers. But they writ their philosophy, or theology thee, mythologically and poetically, in parables and allegories, that needed an interpretation. All these theologers supposed the earth to rise from a chaos; and as they said that love was the principle at first, that united the loose and severed elements, and formed them into an habitable world; so they supposed that if strife or content prevailed, that would again dissolve and disunite them, and reduce things into a chaos; such as the earth will be in, upon the conflagration. And it farther appears, that both these orders of the learned in Greece supposed this present frame of nature might perish, by their doctrine of periodical revolutions, or of the renovation of the world after certain periods of time; which was a doctrine common amongst the learned Greeks, and received by them from the ancient barbaric nations; at will appear more at large in the following book, ch. 3. In the mean time we may observe, that Origin in answering Celsius, lib. 5. about the point of the resurrection, tells him, that doctrine ought not to appear so strange or ridiculous to him, seeing their own authors did believe and teach the renovation of the world, after certain ages or periods. And the truth is, this renovation of the World, rightly stated, is the same thing with the first resurrection of the Christians. And as to the second and general resurrection, when the righteous shall have celestial bodies; it is well known, that the Platonists and Pythagoreans called the foul with a celestial body, or, in their language, an ethereal vehicle, as her last beatitude or glorification. So that Origin might very justly tell his adversary, he had no reason to ridicule the Christian doctrine of the resurrection, seeing their own authors had the main strokes of it in their traditional learning.

I will only add one remark more, before we leave this subject, to prevent a mistake in the word immortal or mortality, when applied to the world. As I told you before, the equivocation that was in that term world, it being used sometimes for the whole universe, sometimes for this inferior part of it where we live; so likewise we must observe, that when this inferior world is said to be immortal, by the philosophers, as sometimes it is, that commonly is not meant of any single state of nature, or any single world, but of a succession of worlds, consequent one upon another. As a family may be said immortal, not in any single person, but in a succession of heirs. So as, many times, when the ancients mention the immortality of the world, they do not thereby exclude the dissolution or renovation of it; but suppose a vicissitude, or series of worlds succeeding one

another. This observation is not mine, but was long since made by Simplicity, and others, who tell us in what sense some of those philosophers, who allowed the world to be perishable, did yet affirm it to be immortal; namely, by successive renovations.

Thus much is sufficient to shew the sense and judgment of antiquity, as to the changeableness or perpetuity of the world. But ancient learning is like ancient medals, more esteemed for their rarity, than their real use; unless the authority of a prince make them current: so neither will these testimonies be of any great effect, unless they be made good and valuable by the authority of scripture. We must therefore add the testimonies of the prophets and apostles, to these of the Greeks and Barbarians, that the evidence may be full and undeniable.

That the heavens and the earth will perish, or be changed into another form, is sometimes plainly expressed, sometimes supposed and alluded to in scripture. The ~ prophet David's testimony is express, both for the- beginning and ending of the world; in Pal. vet. 25, 26, 27. Of old haft thou laid the foundation of the earths and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perijh, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vcfture shalt thou change them, and they shalt be changed. But thou art the fame, and thy years shall have no end. The prophet Isaiah's testimony is no less express, to the fame purpose, ch. 6. Lift up your eyes to the -heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall away like smoke, and the earth pall -wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner. These texts are plain and explicit: and in allusion to this day of the Lord, and this destruction of the world, the fame prophet often phrases that relate to it: as the concussion of the heavens and the earth, Isa. xiii. 13. The shaking of the foundations of the world, ch. xxiv. 18, 19. The dissolution of the host of heaven, ch. xxxiv. 4. And our sacred writers have expressions of the like force, and relating to the fame effect: as the hills melting like wax, at the presence of the Lord, Pal. xcvi. 5." Shattering once more all the parts of the creation, Hag g. ii. 6. Overturning the mountains, and making the pillars of the earth to tremble, Job ix. 5, 6. If you reflect upon the explication given of the deluge, in the first part of this theory, and attend to the manner of the conflagration, as it will be explained in the sequel of this discourse, you will see the justness and of these expressions: that they are not poetical hyperboles, or random expressions of great and terrible things in general, but a true account of what hath been, or will be, at that great day of the Lord. It is true, the prophets sometimes use such like expressions figuratively, for commotions in states and kingdoms, but that is only by way of metaphor and accommodation; the true basis they stand upon, is, that ruin, overthrow, and dissolution of the natural world, which was once at the deluge, and will be again, after another manner, at the general conflagration.

As to the New Testament, our Saviour says, Heaven and earth shall pass away, but his words shall not pass away, Mat. xxiv. 35. St. Paul says, the scheme of this world; the fashion, form, and composition of it, away, i Cor. vii. Jo. And when mention is made of new heavens and a new earth, which both the prophet Isaiah, Isa. lxi. 17. and lxvi. 23. and the apostles St. Peter and St. John, Rev. xxi. 1. 2 Pet. iii. 13. mention, it is plainly implied, that the old ones will be dissolved. The same thing is also implied, when our Saviour speaks of a or regeneration, Mat. xix. 28. and St. Peter, of a restitution of all things, Acts iii. 21. For what is now, must be abolished, before any former order of things can be restored or reduced. In a word, If there was nothing in scripture concerning this subject, but that discourse of St Peter's, in his second epistle, and third chapter, concerning the triple order and succession of the heavens and the earth, past, present, and to come; that alone would be a conviction, and demonstration to me, that this present world will be dissolved.

You will say, it may be, in the last place, we want still the testimony of natural reason and philosophy, to make the evidence complete. I answer, it is enough if they be silent, and have nothing to say to the contrary. Here are witnesses, human and divine, and if none appear against them, we have no reason to refuse their testimony, nor to distrust it. Philosophy will very readily yield to this doctrine, that all material compositions are dissolvable; and she will not wonder to

see that die, which she had seen born: I mean this terrestrial world. She stood Upon the chaos, and saw it roll itself, with difficulty, and after many strugglings, into the form of an habitable earth: and that form she saw broken down again at the deluge; and can as little hope or expect, now, as then, that it should be everlasting and immutable. There would be nothing great or considerable in this inferior world, if there were not such revolutions of nature. The seasons of the year, and the fresh productions of the spring, are pretty in their way; but when the autumn great year comes about, with a new order of all things, in the heavens, and on the earth; and a new dress of nature throughout all her regions, far more goodly and beautiful than the fairest spring; this gives a new life to the creation, and shews the greatness of its author. Besides, these fatal catastrophes are always a punishment to degenerate mankind, that are overwhelmed in the ruins of these perishing worlds. And to make nature herself execute the divine vengeance against rebellious creatures, argues both the power and wisdom of that providence that governs all things here below. These things reason and philosophy approve of; but if you further require, that they should shew a necessity of this suture destruction of the world, from natural causes, with the time, and all other circumstances of this effect; your demands are unreasonable, seeing do not depend solely upon nature. But if you will content know what dispositions there are in nature towards such a change; how it may begin, proceed, and be consummate, under the conduct of providence, be pleased to read the following discourse, for your further satisfaction.

Chap. in.

That the world will be destroyed by fire, is the doctrine of the ancients, especially of the Stoics. That the same doctrine is more ancient than the Greeks, and derived from the barbaric philosophy; and that probably from Noah, the father of all traditional learning. The same doctrine expressly authorized by revelation, and included into the sacred canon,

THAT the present world, or the present frame of nature, will be destroyed, we have already shewn. In what manner this destruction will be, by what force, or what kind of fate, must be our next enquiry. The philosophers have always spoken of fire and water, those two unruly elements, as the only causes that can destroy the world, and work our ruin; and accordingly, they say, all the great and fatal revolutions of nature, either past, or to come, depend upon the violence of these two; when they get the mastery, and overwhelm all the rest, and the whole earth, in a deluge, or conflagration. But, as they make these two the destroying elements, so they also make them the purifying elements. And, accordingly in their sacrifices, or their rites and ceremonies for purging sin, fire and water were chiefly made use of, both amongst the Romans, Greeks, and Barbarians. And when these elements over-run the world, it is not, they say, for a final destruction of it, but to purge mankind, and nature from their impurities. As for purgation by fire and water, the style of our sacred writings does very much accommodate itself to that sense; and the Holy Ghost, who is the great purifier of souls, is compared in his operation upon us, and in our regeneration, to fire or water. And as for the external world, St. Peter, 1 Pet. iii. 21. makes the flood to have been a kind of baptizing or renovation of the world. And St. Paul, 1 Cor. iii. 13. and the prophet Malachi, c. iii. 2, 3. make the last fire, to be a purging and refining fire. But to return to the ancients.

The Stoics especially, of all other sects amongst the Greeks, have preserved the doctrine of the conflagration; and made it a considerable part of their philosophy, and almost a character of their order. This is a thing so well known, that I need not use any citations to prove it. But they cannot pretend to have been the first authors of it neither. For, besides that amongst the Greeks themselves, Heraclitus and more ancient than Zeno, the master of the Stoics, taught this doctrine, it is plainly a branch of the barbaric philosophy, and taken from thence by the Greeks. For it is well known, that the most ancient and mystic learning amongst the Greeks was not originally their own, but borrowed of the eastern nations, by Orpheus, Pythagoras, Plato, and many more, who travelled thither, and traded with the priests for knowledge and philosophy; and when they

got a competent stock, returned home, school, or a sect, to instruct their countrymen. But before we pass to the eastern nations, let us, if you please, compare the Roman philosophy upon this subject, with that of the Greeks.

The Romans were a great people, that made a shew of learning, but had little, in reality, more than words and rhetoric. Their curiosity or emulation in philosophical studies was so little, that it did not make different sects and schools amongst them, as amongst the Greeks. I remember no philosopher s they had, but such as Tully, Seneca, and some of their poets And of these Lucretius, Lu can, and Ovid, have spoken openly of the conflagration. Ovid's verses are well known,

Eff e in fat is affere temp us,

Soho mare, quot tell us, regalia exit

Ardent, et mound moles opera laborer.

A time, decreed by fate, at length quill come,

When heavens, and earth, andfeas, shall have their doom} A fiery doom; and natures mighty
frame Shall break, and be dissolved into a flame.

We see Tully's sense upon this matter, in Scipio's dream. When the old man speaks to nephew Africa nus, and shews him from the clouds, this spot of earth, where we live; he tells him, though our actions should be great, and fortune favour them with success, yet there would be no room for any lairing glory in this world % for the world itself is transient and fugitive. Arid a deluge, or a conflagration, which necessarily happen after certain periods of time, sweep away all records of human actions. As for Seneca, he being a professed Stoic, we need not doubt of his opinion in this point. We may «dd here, if you please, the Sibylline which were kept, with great religion, in the at Pone, and consulted with much ceremony upon column occasions. These Sibyls were the prophetesses of the ge/ttiles; and though their writings now have many spurious additions, yet none doubt but that the conflagration of the world was one of their original prophecies.

Let us now proceed to the eastern nations. As the Romans received the small sill they hid in the sciences, from the Greeks; Sb the Greeks received their chief mystic learning from the Barbarians; that is, from the Egyptians, Persians, Physicians, and other eastern nations; for it is not only the western or northern people, that they called but indeed, all nations besides themselves. For that is commonly the vanity of great empires, to uncivilized, in a manner, all the rest of the world; and to account ail those people barbarous, that are not subject to their dominion. These however, whom they called so, were the most ancient people, and had the sir st learning that was ever heard of after the . flood. And amongst these, the Egyptians were as famous as any; whose sentiments, in this particular, of the conflagration, are well known. For Plato, who lived amongst them several years, tells ms in his Timaeus, that it was the doctrine of their priests, that the fatal catastrophes of the world, were by fire and water. In like manner, the Persians made their beloved god, fire, at length to consume all things that are capable of being consumed: for that is said to have been the doctrine of one of their great Magi, or wise men. As to the Physicians, I suspect very much, that the Stoics had their philosophy from them (Just. Mar- A pol. 2.) and amongst other things the conflagration. We shall take notice of that hereafter.

But to comprehend the Arabians also, and Indians, give me leave to reflect a little upon the story of the phttnix. A story well known, and related by some ancient authors, and is in short this: the

phoenix, they say, is a bird in Arabia, India, and those eastern parts, single in her kind, never more than one at a time, and very long long-lived; appearing only at the expiration of the great year, as they call it: and then she makes herself a nest of spices, which being set on fire by the sun, or some other secret power, she hovers upon it, and consumes herself in the flames. But, which is most wonderful, out of these ashes rises a second phoenix, so that it is not so much a death, as a renovation. I do not doubt but the story is a fable, as to any such kind of bird, single in her species, living, and dying, and reviving in that manner: but it is an apologue, or a fable with an interpretation, and was intended as an emblem of the world; which, as, in a long age, will be consumed in the last fire; and from its ashes or remains, will arise another world, or a new-formed heavens and earth. This, I think, is the true mystery of the phoenix, under which symbol the eastern nations preserved the doctrine of the conflagration, and renovation of the world. They tell somewhat a like story of the eagle, soaring aloft so near the sun, that by his warmth and enlivening rays, she renews her age, and becomes young again. To this the psalmist is thought to allude, Pal. 5. Thy youth shall be renewed like the eagle's; which the Chaldea paraphrase renders, In my undo venture renovate, pent aquiline, These things to me seem plainly to be symbolical, representing that world to come, which the paraphrase mentions, and the singing of this. And this is after the manner of the eastern wisdom; which always loved to go sine, clothed in figures and fancies.

And not only the eastern Barbarians, but the northern and western also, had this doctrine of the conflagration amongst them. The Scythians, in their dispute with the Egyptians about antiquity, argue upon both suppositions, of fire or water, destroying the last world, or beginning this. And in the west, the Celts, the most ancient people there, had the same tradition; for the Druids, who were their priests and philosophers, derived not from the Greeks, but of the old race of wise men, that had their learning traditionally, and, as it were, hereditary from the first ages: these, as Strabo tells us,

Vol. II. C lib. 4. gave the world a kind of immortality, by repeated renovations; and the principle that destroyed it, according to them, was always fire or water. I had forgot to mention, in this list, the Chaldeans, whose opinion we have from Seneca, Nat. 3. c. 29. They did not only teach the conflagration, but also fixed it to a certain period of time, when there should happen a great conjunction of the planets in Cancer. Lastly, we may add, to close the account, the modern Indian philosophers, the heads of the old Brahmans: these, as Maseuse tells us, lib. 16. Hist. Ind. declare, that the world will be renewed after an universal conflagration.

You see of what extent and universality throughout all nations, this doctrine of the conflagration hath been. Let us now consider, what defects or excesses there are, in these ancient opinions, concerning this fate of the world, and how they may be rectified: that we may admit them no further into our belief, than they are warranted by reason, or by the authority of Christian religion. The first fault they seem to have committed about this point, is this, that they made these revolutions and renovations of nature, indefinite or endless; as if there would be such a succession of deluges and conflagrations to all eternity. This the Stoics seem plainly to have asserted, as appears from Numerous, Philo, Simplicity, and others. S. Jerome, 60. imputes this opinion also to Origin; but he does not always hit the true sense of that father, or is not fair and just in the representation of it. -Whosoever held this opinion, it is a manifest error, and may be easily rectified by the Christian revelation; which teaches us plainly, that there is a final period and consummation of all things that belong to this sublunary or terrestrial world; when the kingdom shall be delivered up to the father; and time shall be no more.

Another error they committed in this doctrine, is, the identity, or, if I may so say, of the worlds succeeding one another. They are made, indeed, of the same lump of matter, but they supposed them to return also in the same form. And, which is worse, that there would be the same face of human affairs; the same persons and the same actions over again; so as the second world would be

but a bare repetition of the former, without any variety or diversity. Such a revolution is commonly called the Platonic year: a period when all things return to the same posture they had some thousand of years before; as a play acted over again, upon the same stage, and to the same auditory: this is a groundless and injudicious supposition. For, whether we consider the nature of things, the earth, after a dissolution by fire, or by water, could not return into the same form and fashion it had before; or whether we consider providence, it would no way suit with the divine wisdom and justice, to bring upon the stage again those very scenes, and that very course of human affairs, which it had so lately condemned and destroyed. We may be assured therefore, that, upon the dissolution of a world, a new order of things, both as to nature and providence, always appears: and what that new order will be, in both respects, after the Conflagration, I hope we shall, in the following book, give a satisfactory account.

These are the opinions, true, or false, of the ancients; and chiefly of the Stoics, concerning the mystery of the conflagration. It will not be improper to enquire, in the last place, how the Stoics came by this doctrine: whether it was their discovery and invention, or from whom they learned it. That it was not their own invention, we have given sufficient ground to believe, by shewing the antiquity of it beyond the times of the stoics. Besides, what a man invents himself, he can give the reasons and causes of it, as things upon which he founded his invention: but the Stoics do not this, but, according to the ancient traditional way, deliver the conclusion without proof or premises. We named Heraclitus and amongst the Greeks, to have taught this doctrine before the Stoics; and, according to Plutarch (*de Defect. Ora c.*) Hesiod and Orpheus, authors of the highest antiquity, sung of this last fire in their philosophic poetry. But I suspect the Stoic* had this doctrine from the Physicians; for if we enquire into the original of that sect, we shall find that their founder Zeno, was a barbarian, or semi-barbarian, derived from the Physicians, as Lacertus and Cicero give an account of him. And the Physicians had a great share in the oriental knowledge, as we see by remains in And by their mystical books which Midas mentions, from whence Pythagoras's master, had his learning We may therefore reasonably presume, that it might be from his countrymen, the Phoenicians, that Zeno had the doctrine of the Conflagration. That he brought it first into Greece, but strongly revived it, and made it almost peculiar to his sect.

So much for the Stoics in particular, and the Greeks in general. We have also, you see, traced these opinions higher, to the first barbaric philosophers; who were the first race of philosophers after the flood. But Josephus tells a formal story, of pillars set up by Seth, before the deluge; implying the foreknowledge of this fiery destruction of the world, even from the beginning of it. His words, i.e. 3. are to this effect, give what credit to them you think fit: Seth and his fellow students, having found out the knowledge of the celestial bodies, and the order and disposition of the universe; and having received from Adam, a prophecy, that the world should have a double de*

This is a reproduction of a classic text optimised for kindle devices. We have endeavoured to create this version as close to the original artefact as possible. Although occasionally there may be certain imperfections with these old texts, we believe they deserve to be made available for future generations to enjoy.

Gaudium et spes - Thomas Burnet, Sacred Theory of the Earth (London, 1816), title page.....23.. English edition of Burnet's Theory of the Earth, containing Books 1 and 2, was published. all the General Changes Which it hath already undergone, or is to undergo, Till the English editions of the Theory of the Earth until his death in 1715. The Art Of Public Speaking â€” Dale Carnegie - Volume 2. (Numbers 463â€”851). Translated from the Original Latin by. that the holy supper contains all things of the church visible heaven and the habitable earth, and to create a changes have been carefully made in order to make the book easier his six-volume Swedenborg Concordance (London: Swedenborg. Signs of the Times and Expositor of Prophecy [Himes], vol. 2 - R. Blake and Thomas Burnet's Sacred Theory of the. Earth. Morton D. Paley. Blake/An Illustrated Quarterly, Volume 25, Issue 2, Fall 1991, pp. 75-78 There is much in Burnet that Blake too would have found of interest. In his accounts of the Creation, the Deluge, and the original Paradise.. of all things in the Millennium. Earth, Theories of the - 2 â€” Allison B. Kavey forces operating to create natural change, and the ways in which those Burnet's Sacred Theory of Earth, also discusses the critical importance of the magnusâ€”De Occulta Philosophia Libri Tresâ€”contained a new world that... undergone, or is to Undergo, Till the Consummation of all Things. Thomas Burnet - Walmart - Any attempt to marry the Vedanta to Christianity must take full account of the fact. He has had to exert himself mightily to achieve every kind of original, novel, and. Since the close of the past century, Christian intelligentsia have woken up to find As the context of a word may change its meaning without altering its form, John Milton - This is a reproduction of a book published before 1923. This book may have The Sacred Theory of the Earth : Containing an Account of Its Original Creation, and of All the General Changes, Which It Hath Undergone, or Is to Undergo, Until the Consummation of All Things. in Two Volumes PDF CHM How the Natural Philosophers Defeated the Whore of - jstor - Transcribers note: Chapter XIV contains phonetic representation of the vowel 'o' using. first thing for the beginner in public speaking is to speak--not to study voice and All writers have borne testimony to the power of a speaker's eye in... William Pittenger relates in his volume, "Extempore Speech," an instance of the Studies in the Scriptures Annual Vol., 1947 - Chapel Library - â€œAnd at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in 2. â€œAnd many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things.. created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, 9781298990648: The Sacred Theory Of The Earth: Containing - fact, all Buddhist nations grew up in the cradle of Buddhism. â€œDo no evilâ€•, that is. for humanity, facing responsibilities and undergoing suffering. To the former, a e-LUMINESCIENCES: the blog of Jean-Pierre Luminet - This is a

reproduction of a book published before 1923. This book may have The Sacred Theory of the Earth : Containing an Account of Its Original Creation, and of All the General Changes, Which It Hath Undergone, or Is to Undergo, Until the Consummation of All Things. in Two Volumes PDF CHM The Republic By Plato - The sacred theory of the earth : containing an account of the original of the earth, and of all the general changes which it hath already undergone, or is to undergo, till the consummation of all things.. [Thomas Burnet] Edition/Format: Print book : English : 6th edView all editions and formats. Rating: (not yet rated) 0 with

Relevant Books

[[DOWNLOAD](#)] - High Speed LAN Technology Handbook epub online

[[DOWNLOAD](#)] - Download ebook SYNCH [software] User Guide pdf

[[DOWNLOAD](#)] - Pdf Essential Novelists - MÃ³r JÃ³kai: reality and personal experience

[[DOWNLOAD](#)] - Download book Evidence-Based Practice of Critical Care: Expert Consult: Online and Print, 1e free pdf

[[DOWNLOAD](#)] - Download book Blood of Rome Retribution (The Blood of Rome Chronicles Book 2)
