

Phaedo

By Plato

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Persons of the Dialogue

Phaedo, who is the narrator of the dialogue to **Echecrates** of Phlius
Socrates
Apollodorus
Simmias
Cebes
Crito
Attendant of the Prison

Scene

The Prison of Socrates.

Place of the Narration: Phlius.

Echecrates

[57a] Were you yourself, Phaedo, in the prison with Socrates on the day when he drank the poison [*pharmakon*]?

Phaedo.

I myself was there, Echecrates.

Echecrates

So, what were the things the man said before his death? And how did he reach the fulfillment [*teleutân*] of his life? I would be very glad to hear about it. For neither does any one of us Phliasians nowadays visit Athens, and it has been a long time since any guest from there [= Athens] **[57b]** has visited here [= Phleious], who would be able to report to us clearly about these things - except for the detail that he took poison [*pharmakon*] and died. As for the other related matters, no one had anything to indicate

Phaedo

[58a] So then you have not been informed about the trial [*dikē*] and about how it went?

Echecrates

Well, someone did tell us about those things, but we were wondering why, after the trial [*dikē*] had already taken place some time earlier, he was put to death not right then and there, it seems, but much later. So, why did it happen that way, Phaedo?

Phaedo

It was a matter of chance [*tukhē*], Echecrates, that things happened that way for him.

The reason was that the stern of the ship that the Athenians send to Delos happened to be garlanded [*stephein*] on the day before the trial [*dikē*].

Echecrates

What is this ship?

Phaedo

This is the ship in which, as the Athenians say, Theseus went to Crete when he took with him those famous two-times-seven young people. **[58b]** He saved [*sōzein*] them and he too was saved [*sōzein*]. And they were said to have vowed to Apollo at the time, that if they were saved [*sōzein*] they would make an annual sacred journey [*theōriā*] to Delos. And even now, ever since that time, year after year, they send the ship to the god. So, every time they begin the sacred journey [*theōriā*], they have a custom [*nomos*] at this time of the year to purify [*kathareuein*] the city and to refrain from publicly executing anybody before the ship goes to Delos and then comes back from there. And sometimes this takes a long time, whenever the winds **[58c]** happen to detain them. And the beginning of the sacred journey [*theōriā*] is when the priest of Apollo garlands [*stephein*] the stern of the ship. This happened, as I say, on the day before the trial [*dikē*]. And this was the reason why Socrates spent a long time in prison between the time of his trial [*dikē*] and the time of his death.

Echecrates

What was the manner of his death, Phaedo? What was said or done? And which of his friends had he with him? Or were they not allowed by the authorities to be present? And did he die alone?

Phaedo

[58d] No; there were several of his friends with him.

Echecrates

If you have nothing to do, I wish that you would tell me what passed, as exactly as you can.

Phaedo

I have nothing to do, and will try to gratify your wish. For to me, too, there is no greater pleasure than to have Socrates brought back into my memory [*memnēsthai*], whether I speak myself or hear another speak of him.

Echecrates

You will have listeners who are of the same mind with you, and I hope that you will be as exact as you can.

Phaedo

[58e] I remember the strange feeling which came over me at being with him. For I could hardly believe that I was present at the death of a friend, and therefore I did not pity him, Echecrates; his mien and his language were so noble and fearless in the hour of death that to me he appeared blessed [*eudaimōn*]. I thought that in going to the other world he could not be without a divine call, and that he would be well off, **[59a]** if any man ever was, when he arrived there, and therefore I did not pity him as might seem natural at such a time. But neither could I feel the pleasure which I

usually felt in philosophical discourse (for philosophy was the theme of which we spoke). I was pleased, and I was also pained, because I knew that he was soon to die, and this strange mixture of feeling was shared by us all; we were laughing and weeping by turns, especially the excitable Apollodorus— **[59b]** you know the sort of man?

Echecrates

Yes.

Phaedo

He was quite overcome; and I myself and all of us were greatly moved.

Echecrates

Who were present?

Phaedo

Of native Athenians who were present, there were, besides the Apollodorus I just mentioned, Critobulus and his father Crito; Hermogenes; Epigenes; Aeschines; and Antisthenes; also present was Ctesippus of the deme of Paiania; Menexenus; and some other native Athenians. As for Plato, I think he was not feeling up to it [= he was feeling weak, *a-stheneîn*].

Echecrates

[59c] Were there any strangers?

Phaedo

Yes, there were; Simmias the Theban, and Cebes, and Phaedondes; Euclid and Terpison, who came from Megara.

Echecrates

And was Aristippus there, and Cleombrotus?

Phaedo

No, they were said to be in Aegina.

Echecrates

Anyone else?

Phaedo

I think that these were about all.

Echecrates

And what was the discourse of which you spoke?

Phaedo

I will begin at the beginning, and endeavor to repeat the entire conversation. **[59d]** On previous days, the usual way that I [Phaedo] and the others visited Socrates was by congregating in the morning at the place where trials are held and where his own trial had taken place. That was because this place was near the prison. So, every day, we used to wait until the entrance to the prison was opened, having conversations

with each other while waiting, since the prison usually did not open all that early. And, once it opened, we used to go in and visit with Socrates, usually spending the whole day with him. On the last day, we met earlier than usual. That was because we had found out on the previous day, [59e] as we were leaving the prison in the evening, that the [sacred] ship had arrived from Delos. So, we agreed to meet very early at the usual place. We went to the prison, and the guard who used to let us in came up to us and told us to wait and not to go further until he called us. "That is because the Board of Eleven," he said, "are now with Socrates, and they are taking off his chains. They are giving him the order that he is to end it all on this very day." Not too long after that, the guard came back and told us that we may come in. When we entered, [60a] we found Socrates just released from chains, and Xanthippe—you know her, right?—was sitting next to him and holding his child. When Xanthippe saw us, she said some ritualized words [*an-eu-phēmeîn*], the kind that women are accustomed to say, and the wording went something like this: "Socrates, now is the last time when your dear ones will be talking to you and you to them." Socrates glanced at Crito and said to him: "Crito, will someone please take her home?" Then a few of Crito's people led her away; she was crying [60b] and hitting herself. And when she was gone, Socrates, sitting up on the couch, began to bend and rub his leg, saying, as he rubbed: "How singular is the thing called pleasure, and how curiously related to pain, which might be thought to be the opposite of it; for they never come to a man together, and yet he who pursues either of them is generally compelled to take the other. They are two, and yet they grow together out of one head or stem; [60c] and I cannot help thinking that if Aesop had noticed them, he would have made a fable [*mūthos*] about the god trying to reconcile their strife, and when he could not, he fastened their heads together; and this is the reason why when one comes the other follows, as I find in my own case pleasure comes following after the pain in my leg, which was caused by the chain."

Upon this Cebes said, "I am very glad indeed, Socrates, that you mentioned the name of Aesop. [60d] For that reminds me of a question which has been asked by others, and was asked of me only the day before yesterday by Evenus the poet, and as he will be sure to ask again, you may as well tell me what I should say to him, if you would like him to have an answer. He wanted to know why you who never before composed a line of poetry, now that you are in prison are putting Aesop into verse, and also composing a hymn in honor of Apollo."

"Tell him, Cebes," he replied, "that I had no idea of rivaling him or his poems; [60e] which is the truth, for I knew that I could not do that. But I wanted to see whether I could engage with the holiness of certain dreams. In the course of my life I have often had the same recurrent dream, which appeared in different forms in different versions of my envisaging the dream, but which always said the same thing: "Socrates," it said, "go and practice the craft of the Muses [*mousikē*] and keep on working at it." Previously, I had imagined that this was only intended to urge [61a] and encourage me to keep on doing what has always been the pursuit of my life, in the same way that competitors in a footrace are called on by the spectators to run when they are already running. So, I thought that the dream was calling on me to keep on doing what I was already doing, which is, to practice philosophy as the craft of the Muses [*mousikē*], since philosophy is the greatest form of this craft and since I practiced philosophy. But now that the trial [*dikē*] has taken place and the festival of the god [Apollo] has been causing the postponement of my execution, I got the idea that I

should do something different, just in case the dream was ordering me to practice the craft of the Muses [*mousikē*] in the popular [*dēmōdēs*] sense of the word—so I got the idea that I should not disobey it [= the dream] and that I should go ahead and practice this craft. I was thinking that it would be a safer thing not to depart [this world] before performing a sacred rite by making poetry [*poiēmata*] and thus **[61b]** obeying the dream. So, the first thing I did was to make a poem [*poieîn*] in honor of the god who is the recipient of the current festival, and then, after [*meta*] having finished with the god, here is what I [= Socrates] did: keeping in mind that a poet must, if he is really going to be a poet, make [*poieîn*] myths [*mūthoi*] and not just words [*logoi*] in general, and that I was no expert in the discourse of myth [*mūthologikos*], I took some myths [*mūthoi*] of Aesop that I knew and had on hand, and I made poetry [*poieîn*] out of the first few of these that I happened upon. Tell Evenus this, and bid him be of good cheer; that I would have him come after me if he be a wise man, and not tarry; **[61c]** and that today I am likely to be going, for the Athenians say that I must.”

Simmiias said, “What a message for such a man! Having been a frequent companion of his, I should say that, as far as I know him, he will never take your advice unless he is obliged.”

“Why,” said Socrates, “—is not Evenus a philosopher?”

“I think that he is,” said Simmiias.

“Then he, or any man who has the spirit of philosophy, will be willing to die, though he will not take his own life, for that is held not to be right.”

[61d] Here he changed his position, and put his legs off the couch on to the ground, and during the rest of the conversation he remained sitting.

“Why do you say,” inquired Cebes, “that a man ought not to take his own life, but that the philosopher will be ready to follow the dying?”

Socrates replied: “And have you, Cebes and Simmiias, who are acquainted with Philolaus, never heard him speak of this?”

“I never understood him, Socrates.”

“My words, too, are only an echo; but I am very willing to say what I have heard: and indeed, **[61e]** as I am going to another place, I ought to be thinking and talking [= telling the *mūthos*] of the nature of the journey which I am about to take. What can I do better in the interval between this and the setting of the sun?”

“Then tell me, Socrates, why is suicide held not to be right? as I have certainly heard Philolaus affirm when he was staying with us at Thebes: and there are others who say the same, **[62a]** although none of them has ever made me understand him.”

“But do your best,” replied Socrates, “and the day may come when you will understand. I suppose that you wonder why, as most things which are evil may be accidentally good, this is to be the only exception (for may not death, too, be better

than life in some cases?), and why, when a man is better dead, he is not permitted to be his own benefactor, but must wait for the hand of another."

"By Zeus! Yes, indeed," said Cebes, laughing, and speaking in his native Doric.

"I admit the appearance of inconsistency," replied Socrates, **[62b]** "but there may not be any real inconsistency after all in this. There is a doctrine uttered in secret that man is a prisoner who has no right to open the door of his prison and run away; this doctrine appears to be a great one, which I do not quite understand. Yet I, too, believe that the gods are our guardians, and that we are a possession of theirs. Do you not agree?"

"Yes, I agree to that," said Cebes.

[62c] "And if one of your own possessions, an ox or an ass, for example took the liberty of putting himself out of the way when you had not indicated [*sēmainein*] your wish that he should die, would you not be angry with him, and would you not punish him if you could?"

"Certainly," replied Cebes.

"Then there may be reason in saying that a man should wait, and not take his own life until the god summons him, as he is now summoning me."

"Yes, Socrates," said Cebes, "there is surely reason in that. And yet how can you reconcile this seemingly true belief that the god is our guardian and we his possessions, **[62d]** with that willingness to die which we were attributing to the philosopher? That the wisest of men should be willing to leave this service in which they are ruled by the gods who are the best of rulers is not reasonable, for surely no wise man thinks that when set at liberty he can take better care of himself than the gods take of him. A fool may perhaps think this—he may argue that he had better run away from his master, **[62e]** not considering that his duty is to remain to the end, and not to run away from the good, and that there is no sense in his running away. But the wise man will want to be ever with him who is better than himself. Now this, Socrates, is the reverse of what was just now said; for upon this view the wise man should sorrow and the fool rejoice at passing out of life."

[63a] The earnestness of Cebes seemed to please Socrates. "Here," said he, turning to us, "is a man who is always inquiring, and is not to be convinced all in a moment, nor by every argument."

"And in this case," added Simmias, "his objection does appear to me to have some force. For what can be the meaning of a truly wise man wanting to flee and lightly leave a master who is better than himself? And I rather imagine that Cebes is referring to you; he thinks that you are too ready to leave us, and too ready to leave the gods who, as you acknowledge, are our good rulers."

[63b] "Yes," replied Socrates; "there is reason in that. And this indictment you think that I ought to answer as if I were in court?"

"That is what we should like," said Simmias.

"Then I must try to make a better impression upon you than I did when defending myself before the jury. For I am quite ready to acknowledge, Simmias and Cebes, that I ought to be grieved at death, **[63c]** if I were not persuaded that I am going to other gods who are wise and good (of this I am as certain as I can be of anything of the sort) and to men departed (though I am not so certain of this), who are better than those whom I leave behind; and therefore I do not grieve as I might have done, for I have good hope that there is yet something remaining for the dead, and, as has been said of old, some far better thing for the good than for the evil."

"But do you mean to take away your thoughts with you, Socrates?" said Simmias.

"Will you not communicate them to us? **[63d]** For the benefit is one in which we too may hope to share. Moreover, if you succeed in convincing us, that will be an answer to the charge against yourself."

"I will do my best," replied Socrates. "But you must first let me hear what Crito wants; he was going to say something to me."

"Only this, Socrates," replied Crito: "the attendant who is to give you the poison has been telling me that you are not to talk much, and he wants me to let you know this; for that by talking heat is increased, and this interferes with the action of the poison; **[63e]** those who excite themselves are sometimes obliged to drink the poison two or three times."

"Then," said Socrates, "let him mind his business and be prepared to give the poison two or three times, if necessary; that is all."

"I was almost certain that you would say that," replied Crito; "but I was obliged to satisfy him."

"Never mind him," he said. "And now I will make answer to you, O my judges, and show that he who has lived as a true philosopher has reason to be of good cheer when he is about to die, **[64a]** and that after death he may hope to receive the greatest good in the other world. And how this may be, Simmias and Cebes, I will endeavor to explain. For I deem that the true disciple of philosophy is likely to be misunderstood by other men; they do not perceive that he is ever pursuing death and dying; and if this is true, why, having had the desire of death all his life long, should he regret the arrival of that which he has been always pursuing and desiring?"

Simmias laughed and said, **[64b]** "Though not in a laughing humor, I swear that I cannot help laughing when I think what the wicked world will say when they hear this. They will say that this is very true, and our people at home will agree with them in saying that the life which philosophers desire is truly death, and that they have found them out to be deserving of the death which they desire."

"And they are right, Simmias, in saying this, with the exception of the words 'They have found them out'; for they have not found out what is the nature of this death which the true philosopher desires, or how he deserves or desires death. **[64c]** But let us leave them and have a word with ourselves: do we believe that there is such a

thing as death?"

"To be sure," replied Simmias.

"And is this anything but the separation of *psūkhē* and body? And being dead is the attainment of this separation; when the *psūkhē* exists in itself, and is parted from the body and the body is parted from the *psūkhē*—that is death?"

"Exactly: that and nothing else," he replied.

"And what do you say of another question, my friend, about which I should like to have your opinion, **[64d]** and the answer to which will probably throw light on our present inquiry: do you think that the philosopher ought to care about the pleasures—if they are to be called pleasures—of eating and drinking?"

"Certainly not," answered Simmias. "

"And what do you say of the pleasures of love—should he care about them?"

"By no means."

"And will he think much of the other ways of indulging the body – for example, the acquisition of costly raiment, or sandals, or other adornments of the body? Instead of caring about them, does he not rather despise **[64e]** anything more than nature needs? What do you say?"

I should say the true philosopher would despise them."

"Would you not say that he is entirely concerned with the *psūkhē* and not with the body? He would like, as far as he can, to be rid of the body and turn to the *psūkhē*."

That is true."

"In matters of this sort philosophers, above all other men, may be observed in every sort of way **[65a]** to dissever the *psūkhē* from the body."

That is true."

"Whereas, Simmias, the rest of the world are of opinion that a life which has no bodily pleasures and no part in them is not worth having; but that he who thinks nothing of bodily pleasures is almost as though he were dead."

"That is quite true."

"What again shall we say of the actual acquisition of knowledge?—is the body, if invited to share in the inquiry, a hinderer or a helper? **[65b]** I mean to say, have sight and hearing any truth in them? Are they not, as the poets are always telling us, inaccurate witnesses? And yet, if even they are inaccurate and indistinct, what is to be said of the other senses?—for you will allow that they are the best of them?"

"Certainly," he replied.

"Then when," he [= Socrates] said, "does the *psūkhē* attain truth? For in attempting to consider anything in company with the body it is obviously deceived."

[65c] "Yes, that is true."

"Then must not existence be revealed to it in thought, if at all?"

"Yes."

"And thought is best when the mind is gathered into itself and none of these things trouble it—neither sounds nor sights nor pain nor any pleasure—when it has as little as possible to do with the body, and has no bodily sense or feeling, but is aspiring after being?"

"That is true."

[65d] "And in this the philosopher dishonors the body; his *psūkhē* runs away from the body and desires to be alone and by itself?"

"That is true."

"Well, but there is another thing, Simmias: is there or is there not an absolute justice?"

"Assuredly there is."

"And an absolute beauty and absolute good? "

"Of course."

"But did you ever behold any of them with your eyes?"

"Certainly not."

"Or did you ever reach them with any other bodily sense? (and I speak not of these alone, but of absolute greatness, and health, and strength, **[65e]** and of the essence or true nature of everything). Has the reality of them ever been perceived by you through the bodily organs? Or rather, is not the nearest approach to the knowledge of their several natures made by him who so orders his intellectual vision as to have the most exact conception of the essence of that which he considers?"

"Certainly."

"And he attains to the knowledge of them in their highest purity who goes to each of them with the mind alone, not allowing when in the act of thought the intrusion or introduction of sight or any other sense in the company of reason, **[66a]** but with the very light of the mind in its clearness penetrates into the very fight of truth in each; he has got rid, as far as he can, of eyes and ears and of the whole body, which he

conceives of only as a disturbing element, hindering the *psūkhē* from the acquisition of knowledge when in company with it – is not this the sort of man who, if ever man did, is likely to attain the knowledge of existence?”

“There is admirable truth in that, Socrates,” replied Simmias.

[66b] “And when they consider all this, must not true philosophers make a reflection, of which they will speak to one another in such words as these: ‘We have found,’ they will say, ‘a path of speculation which seems to bring us and the argument to the conclusion that while we are in the body, and while the *psūkhē* is mingled with this mass of evil, our desire will not be satisfied, and our desire is of the truth. For the body is a source of endless trouble to us by reason of the mere requirement of food; **[66c]** and also is liable to diseases which overtake and impede us in the search after truth: and by filling us so full of loves, and lusts, and fears, and fancies, and idols, and every sort of folly, prevents our ever having, as people say, so much as a thought. For whence come wars, and fighting, and factions? Whence but from the body and the lusts of the body? For wars are occasioned by the love of money, **[66d]** and money has to be acquired for the sake and in the service of the body; and in consequence of all these things the time which ought to be given to philosophy is lost. Moreover, if there is time and an inclination toward philosophy, yet the body introduces a turmoil and confusion and fear into the course of speculation, and hinders us from seeing the truth: and all experience shows that if we would have pure knowledge of anything we must be quit of the body, **[66e]** and the *psūkhē* in itself must behold all things in themselves: then I suppose that we shall attain that which we desire, and of which we say that we are lovers, and that is wisdom, not while we live, but after death, as the argument indicates [*sēmainein*]; for if while in company with the body the *psūkhē* cannot have pure knowledge, one of two things seems to follow—either knowledge is not to be attained at all, or, if at all, after death. For then, and not till then, **[67a]** the *psūkhē* will be in itself alone and without the body. In this present life, I reckon that we make the nearest approach to knowledge when we have the least possible concern or interest in the body, and are not saturated with the bodily nature, but remain pure until the hour when the god himself is pleased to release us. And then the foolishness of the body will be cleared away and we shall be pure and hold converse with other pure *psūkhai*, and know of ourselves the clear light everywhere; and this is surely the light of truth. **[67b]** For no impure thing is allowed to approach the pure.’ These are the sort of words, Simmias, which the true lovers of wisdom cannot help saying to one another, and thinking. You will agree with me in that?”

“Certainly, Socrates.”

“But if this is true, O my friend, then there is great hope that, going whither I go, I shall there be satisfied with that which has been the chief concern of you and me in our lives. And now that the hour of departure is appointed to me, **[67c]** this is the hope with which I depart, and not I only, but every man who believes that he has his mind purified.”

“Certainly,” replied Simmias.

“And what is purification but the separation of the *psūkhē* from the body, as I was saying before; the habit of the *psūkhē* gathering and collecting itself into itself, out of

all the courses of the body; the dwelling in its own place alone, **[67d]** as in another life, so also in this, as far as it can; the release of the *psūkhē* from the chains of the body?"

"Very true," he said.

"And what is that which is termed death, but this very separation and release of the *psūkhē* from the body?"

"To be sure," he said.

"And the true philosophers, and they only, study and are eager to release the *psūkhē*. Is not the separation and release of the *psūkhē* from the body their especial study?"

"That is true."

"And as I was saying at first, there would be a ridiculous contradiction in men studying to live as nearly as they can in a state of death, **[67e]** and yet feeling regret when death comes."

"Certainly."

"Then, Simmias, as the true philosophers are ever studying death, to them, of all men, death is the least terrible. Look at the matter in this way: how inconsistent of them to have been always enemies of the body, and wanting to have the *psūkhē* alone, and when this is granted to them, to be trembling and regretting; instead of rejoicing at their departing to that place where, when they arrive, they hope to gain that which in life they loved **[68a]** (and this was wisdom), and at the same time to be rid of the company of their enemy. Many a man has been willing to go to the world beyond in the hope of seeing there an earthly love, or wife, or son, and conversing with them. And will he who is a true lover of wisdom, and is persuaded in like manner **[68b]** that only in that other world over there can he worthily enjoy it, still be regretful at death? Will he not depart with joy? Surely he will, my friend, if he be a true philosopher. For he will have a firm conviction that there only, and nowhere else, he can find wisdom in its purity. And if this be true, he would be very absurd, as I was saying, if he were to fear death."

"He would, indeed," replied Simmias.

"And when you see a man who is feeling regretful at the approach of death, is not his reluctance a sufficient proof that he is not a lover of wisdom, but a lover of the body, **[68c]** and probably at the same time a lover of either money or power, or both?"

"That is very true," he replied.

"There is a virtue, Simmias, which is named courage. Is not that a special attribute of the philosopher?"

"Certainly."

"Again, there is temperance. Is not the calm, and control, and disdain of the passions which even the many call temperance, a quality belonging only to those who despise the body and live in philosophy?"

[68d] "That is not to be denied."

"For the courage and temperance of other men, if you will consider them, are really a contradiction."

"How is that, Socrates?"

"Well," he said, "you are aware that death is regarded by men in general as a great evil."

"That is true," he said.

"And do not courageous men endure death because they are afraid of yet greater evils?"

"That is true."

"Then all but the philosophers are courageous only from fear, and because they are afraid; and yet that a man should be courageous from fear, and because he is a coward, is surely a strange thing."

[68e] "Very true."

"And are not the temperate exactly in the same case? They are temperate because they are intemperate—which may seem to be a contradiction, but is nevertheless the sort of thing which happens with this foolish temperance. For there are pleasures which they must have, and are afraid of losing; and therefore they abstain from one class of pleasures because they are overcome by another: and whereas intemperance is defined as 'being under the dominion of pleasure,' **[69a]** they overcome only because they are overcome by pleasure. And that is what I mean by saying that they are temperate through intemperance."

"That appears to be true."

"Yet the exchange of one fear or pleasure or pain for another fear or pleasure or pain, which are measured like coins, the greater with the less, is not the exchange of virtue. O my dear Simmias, is there not one true coin for which all things ought to exchange, **[69b]** and that is wisdom? And only in exchange for this, and in company with this, is anything truly bought or sold, whether courage or temperance or justice. And is not all true virtue the companion of wisdom, no matter what fears or pleasures or other similar goods or evils may or may not attend it? But the virtue which is made up of these goods, when they are severed from wisdom and exchanged with one another, is a shadow of virtue only, nor is there any freedom or health or truth in it; but in the true exchange there is a purging away of all these things, **[69c]** and temperance, and justice, and courage, and wisdom itself are a purgation of them. And perhaps even those who established for us the mysteries [*teletai*] were not unworthy but had a real

meaning when they said long ago in a riddling way [*ainittesthai* = verb of *ainigma*] that he who arrives without initiation [*amuētos*] and without ritual induction [*ateleustos*, from verb of *telos*] into the realm of Hādēs will lie in mud, but that he who arrives to that place [*ekeīse*] after purification [= verb of *katharsis*] and induction [verb of *telos*] will dwell [*oikeîn*] with the gods. As those who are involved in the mysteries [*teletai*] say, 'Many are the carriers of the Bacchic wand [*narthēx*], **[69d]** but few are the *bakkhoi* [= the true worshippers of Bacchus].' And these [true worshippers] are, in my opinion, none other than those who have practiced philosophy [*philosophheîn*] correctly. In the number of whom I have been seeking, according to my ability, to find a place during my whole life; whether I have sought in a right way or not, and whether I have succeeded or not, I shall truly know in a little while, if the god will, when I myself arrive in the other world: that is my belief. And now, Simmias and Cebes, I have answered those who charge me with not grieving or feeling regretful at parting from you and my masters in this world; and I am right in having no regrets, **[69e]** for I believe that I shall find other masters and friends who are as good in the world beyond. But all men cannot believe this, and I shall be glad if my words have any more success with you than with the jurymen of the Athenians."

Cebes answered: "I agree, Socrates, in the greater part of what you say. **[70a]** But in what relates to the *psūkhē*, men are apt to be incredulous; they fear that when it leaves the body its place may be nowhere, and that on the very day of death it may be destroyed and perish—immediately on its release from the body, issuing forth like smoke or air and vanishing away into nothingness. For if it could only hold together and be itself after it was released from the evils of the body, **[70b]** there would be good reason to hope, Socrates, that what you say is true. But much persuasion [*paramuthia* = diversion by way of *mūthos*] and many arguments are required in order to prove that when the man is dead the *psūkhē* yet exists, and has any force of intelligence."

"True, Cebes," said Socrates; "and shall I suggest that we talk [*diamuthologeîn* = speak through *mūthos*] a little of the probabilities of these things?"

"I am sure," said Cebes, "that I should greatly like to know your opinion about them."

"I reckon," said Socrates, "that no one who heard me now, **[70c]** not even if he were one of my old enemies, the comic poets, could accuse me of idle talking about matters in which I have no concern. Let us, then, if you please, proceed with the inquiry.

"Whether the *psūkhai* of men after death are or are not in the world of Hādēs, is a question which may be argued in this manner: the ancient doctrine of which I have been speaking affirms that they go from this into the other world, and return hither, and are born from the dead. Now if this be true, and the living come from the dead, then our *psūkhai* must be in the other world, **[70d]** for if not, how could they be born again? And this would be conclusive, if there were any real evidence that the living are only born from the dead; but if there is no evidence of this, then other arguments will have to be adduced."

"That is very true," replied Cebes.

"Then let us consider this question, not in relation to man only, but in relation to

animals generally, and to plants, and to everything of which there is generation, and the proof will be easier. **[70e]** Are not all things which have opposites generated out of their opposites? I mean such things as good and evil, just and unjust—and there are innumerable other opposites which are generated out of opposites. And I want to show that this holds universally of all opposites; I mean to say, for example, that anything which becomes greater must become greater after being less.”

“True.”

“And that which becomes less **[71a]** must have been once greater and then become less.”

“Yes.”

“And the weaker is generated from the stronger, and the swifter from the slower.”

“Very true.”

“And the worse is from the better, and the more just is from the more unjust.”

“Of course.”

“And is this true of all opposites? And are we convinced that all of them are generated out of opposites?”

“Yes.”

“And in this universal opposition of all things, are there not also two intermediate processes which are ever going on, **[71b]** from one to the other, and back again; where there is a greater and a less there is also an intermediate process of increase and diminution, and that which grows is said to wax, and that which decays to wane?”

“Yes,” he said.

“And there are many other processes, such as division and composition, cooling and heating, which equally involve a passage into and out of one another. And this holds of all opposites, even though not always expressed in words—they are generated out of one another, and there is a passing or process from one to the other of them?”

[71c] “Very true,” he replied.

“Well, and is there not an opposite of life, as sleep is the opposite of waking?”

“True,” he said.

“And what is that?”

“Death,” he answered.

“And these, then, are generated, if they are opposites, the one from the other, and

have there their two intermediate processes also?"

"Of course."

"Now," said Socrates, "I will analyze one of the two pairs of opposites which I have mentioned to you, and also its intermediate processes, and you shall analyze the other to me. The state of sleep is opposed to the state of waking, and out of sleeping waking is generated, and out of waking, sleeping, **[71d]** and the process of generation is in the one case falling asleep, and in the other waking up. Are you agreed about that?"

"Quite agreed."

"Then suppose," he [= Socrates] said, "that you analyze life and death to me in the same manner. Is not death opposed to life?"

"Yes."

"And they are generated one from the other?"

"Yes."

"What is generated from life?"

"Death," he said.

"And what from death?"

"I can only say in answer—life."

"Then the living, whether things or persons, Cebes, are generated from the dead?"

[71e] "That is clear," he replied.

"Then the inference is, that our *psūkhai* are in the world below?"

"That is true."

"And one of the two processes or generations is visible—for surely the act of dying is visible?"

"Surely," he [= Cebes] said.

"And may not the other be inferred as the complement of nature, who is not to be supposed to go on one leg only? And if not, a corresponding process of generation in death must also be assigned to it?"

"Certainly," he replied.

"And what is that process?"

“Revival.”

“And revival, if there be such a thing, **[72a]** is the birth of the dead into the world of the living?”

“Quite true.”

“Then there is a new way in which we arrive at the inference that the living come from the dead, just as the dead come from the living; and if this is true, then the *psūkhai* of the dead must be in some place out of which they come again. And this, as I think, has been satisfactorily proved.”

“Yes, Socrates,” he said, “all this seems to flow necessarily out of our previous admissions.”

“And that these admissions are not unfair, Cebes,” he said, “may be shown, as I think, in this way. **[72b]** If generation were in a straight line only, and there were no compensation or circle in nature, no turn or return into one another, then you know that all things would at last have the same form and pass into the same state, and there would be no more generation of them.”

“What do you mean?” he said.

“A simple thing enough, which I will illustrate by the case of sleep,” he replied. “You know that if there were no compensation of sleeping and waking, **[72c]** the story of the sleeping Endymion would in the end have no meaning, because all other things would be asleep, too, and he would not be thought of. Or if there were composition only, and no division of substances, then the chaos of Anaxagoras would come again. And in like manner, my dear Cebes, if all things which partook of life were to die, and after they were dead remained in the form of death, and did not come to life again, all would at last die, **[72d]** and nothing would be alive—how could this be otherwise? For if the living spring from any others who are not the dead, and they die, must not all things at last be swallowed up in death?”

“There is no escape from that, Socrates,” said Cebes; “and I think that what you say is entirely true.”

“Yes,” he said, “Cebes, I entirely think so, too; and we are not walking in a vain imagination; but I am confident in the belief that there truly is such a thing as living again, and that the living spring from the dead, and that the *psūkhai* of the dead are in existence, and that the good *psūkhai* have a better portion than the **[72e]** evil.”

Cebes added: “Your favorite doctrine, Socrates, that knowledge is simply recollection, if true, also necessarily implies a previous time in which we learned that which we now recollect. But this would be impossible **[73a]** unless our *psūkhē* was in some place before existing in the human form; here, then, is another argument for the immortality of the *psūkhē*.”

“But tell me, Cebes,” said Simmias, interposing, “what proofs are given of this doctrine of recollection? I am not very sure at this moment that I remember them.”

"One excellent proof," said Cebes, "is afforded by questions. If you put a question to a person in a right way, he will give a true answer of himself; but how could he do this unless there were knowledge and right reason already in him? And this is most clearly shown when he is taken **[73b]** to a diagram or to anything of that sort."

"But if," said Socrates, "you are still incredulous, Simmias, I would ask you whether you may not agree with me when you look at the matter in another way; I mean, if you are still incredulous as to whether knowledge is recollection."

"Incredulous, I am not," said Simmias; "but I want to have this doctrine of recollection brought to my own recollection, and, from what Cebes has said, I am beginning to recollect and be convinced; but I should still like to hear what more you have to say."

[73c] "This is what I would say," he replied: "We should agree, if I am not mistaken, that what a man recollects he must have known at some previous time."

"Very true."

"And what is the nature of this recollection? And, in asking this, I mean to ask whether, when a person has already seen or heard or in any way perceived anything, and he knows not only that, but something else of which he has not the same, but another knowledge, we may not fairly say that **[73d]** he recollects that which comes into his mind. Are we agreed about that?"

"What do you mean?"

"I mean what I may illustrate by the following instance: The knowledge of a lyre is not the same as the knowledge of a man?"

"True."

"And yet what is the feeling of lovers when they recognize a lyre, or a garment, or anything else which the beloved has been in the habit of using? Do not they, from knowing the lyre, form in the mind's eye an image of the youth to whom the lyre belongs? And this is recollection: and in the same way anyone who sees Simmias may remember Cebes; and there are endless other things of the same nature."

"Yes, indeed, there are—endless," replied Simmias. **[73e]** "And this sort of thing," he said, "is recollection, and is most commonly a process of recovering that which has been forgotten through time and inattention."

"Very true," he said.

"Well; and may you not also from seeing the picture of a horse or a lyre remember a man? And from the picture of Simmias, you may be led to remember Cebes?"

"True."

"Or you may also be led to the recollection of Simmias himself?"

[74a] "True," he said."

"And in all these cases, the recollection may be derived from things either like or unlike?"

"That is true."

"And when the recollection is derived from like things, then there is sure to be another question, which is, whether the likeness of that which is recollected is in any way defective or not."

"Very true," he said.

"And shall we proceed a step further, and affirm that there is such a thing as equality, not of wood with wood, or of stone with stone, but that, over and above this, there is equality in the abstract? Shall we affirm this?"

[74b] "Affirm, yes, and swear to it," replied Simmias, "with all the confidence in life."

"And do we know the nature of this abstract essence?"

"To be sure," he said.

"And whence did we obtain this knowledge? Did we not see equalities of material things, such as pieces of wood and stones, and gather from them the idea of an equality which is different from them?—you will admit that? Or look at the matter again in this way: Do not the same pieces of wood or stone appear at one time equal, and at another time unequal?"

"That is certain."

"But are real equals ever unequal? Or is the idea of equality ever inequality?"

[74c] "That surely was never yet known, Socrates."

"Then these (so-called) equals are not the same with the idea of equality?"

"I should say, clearly not, Socrates."

"And yet from these equals, although differing from the idea of equality, you conceived and attained that idea?"

"Very true," he said.

"Which might be like, or might be unlike them?"

"Yes."

"But that makes no difference; whenever from seeing one thing **[74d]** you conceived another, whether like or unlike, there must surely have been an act of recollection?"

“Very true.”

“But what would you say of equal portions of wood and stone, or other material equals? And what is the impression produced by them? Are they equals in the same sense as absolute equality? Or do they fall short of this in a measure?”

“Yes,” he said, “in a very great measure, too.”

“And must we not allow that when I or anyone look at any object, and perceive that the object aims at being some other thing, but falls short of, **[74e]** and cannot attain to it – he who makes this observation must have had previous knowledge of that to which, as he says, the other, although similar, was inferior?”

“Certainly.”

“And has not this been our case in the matter of equals and of absolute equality?”

“Precisely.”

“Then we must have known absolute equality **[75a]** previously to the time when we first saw the material equals, and reflected that all these apparent equals aim at this absolute equality, but fall short of it?”

“That is true. And we recognize also that this absolute equality has only been known, and can only be known, through the medium of sight or touch, or of some other sense. And this I would affirm of all such conceptions.”

“Yes, Socrates, as far as the argument is concerned, one of them is the same as the other.”

“And from the senses, then, is derived the knowledge that **[75b]** all sensible things aim at an idea of equality of which they fall short—is not that true?”

“Yes.”

“Then before we began to see or hear or perceive in any way, we must have had a knowledge of absolute equality, or we could not have referred to that the equals which are derived from the senses – for to that they all aspire, and of that they fall short?”

“That, Socrates, is certainly to be inferred from the previous statements.”

“And did we not see and hear and acquire our other senses as soon as we were born?”

[75c] “Certainly.”

“Then we must have acquired the knowledge of the ideal equal at some time previous to this?”

“Yes.”

"That is to say, before we were born, I suppose?"

"True."

"And if we acquired this knowledge before we were born, and were born having it, then we also knew before we were born and at the instant of birth not only equal or the greater or the less, but all other ideas; for we are not speaking only of equality absolute, but of beauty, goodness, justice, holiness, **[75d]** and all which we stamp with the name of essence in the dialectical process, when we ask and answer questions. Of all this we may certainly affirm that we acquired the knowledge before birth?"

"That is true."

"But if, after having acquired, we have not forgotten that which we acquired, then we must always have been born with knowledge, and shall always continue to know as long as life lasts—for knowing is the acquiring and retaining knowledge and not forgetting. Is not forgetting, Simmias, just the losing of knowledge?"

"Quite true, Socrates."

[75e] "But if the knowledge which we acquired before birth was lost by us at birth, and afterwards by the use of the senses we recovered that which we previously knew, will not that which we call learning be a process of recovering our knowledge, and may not this be rightly termed recollection by us?"

"Very true."

"For this is clear, **[76a]** that when we perceived something, either by the help of sight or hearing, or some other sense, there was no difficulty in receiving from this a conception of some other thing like or unlike which had been forgotten and which was associated with this; and therefore, as I was saying, one of two alternatives follows: either we had this knowledge at birth, and continued to know through life; or, after birth, those who are said to learn only remember, and learning is recollection only."

"Yes, that is quite true, Socrates."

"And which alternative, Simmias, do you prefer? **[76b]** Had we the knowledge at our birth, or did we remember afterwards the things which we knew previously to our birth?"

"I cannot decide at the moment."

"At any rate you can decide whether he who has knowledge ought or ought not to be able to give a reason for what he knows."

"Certainly, he ought."

"But do you think that every man is able to give a reason about these very matters of which we are speaking?"

"I wish that they could, Socrates, but I greatly fear that tomorrow at this time there will be no one able to give a reason worth having."

[76c] "Then you are not of the opinion, Simmias, that all men know these things?"

"Certainly not."

"Then they are in process of recollecting that which they learned before."

"Certainly."

"But when did our *psūkhai* acquire this knowledge? Not since we were born as men?"

"Certainly not."

"And therefore previously?"

"Yes."

"Then, Simmias, our *psūkhai* must have existed before they were in the form of man—without bodies, and must have had intelligence."

"Unless indeed you suppose, Socrates, that these notions were given us at the moment of birth; **[76d]** for this is the only time that remains."

"Yes, my friend, but when did we lose them? For they are not in us when we are born—that is admitted. Did we lose them at the moment of receiving them, or at some other time?"

"No, Socrates, I perceive that I was unconsciously talking nonsense."

"Then may we not say, Simmias, that if, as we are always repeating, there is an absolute beauty, and goodness, and essence in general, and to this, **[76e]** which is now discovered to be a previous condition of our being, we refer all our sensations, and with this compare them—assuming this to have a prior existence, then our *psūkhai* must have had a prior existence, but if not, there would be no force in the argument? There can be no doubt that if these absolute ideas existed before we were born, then our *psūkhai* must have existed before we were born, and if not the ideas, then not the *psūkhai*."

"Yes, Socrates; I am convinced that there is precisely the same necessity for the existence of the *psūkhē* before birth, **[77a]** and of the essence of which you are speaking: and the argument arrives at a result which happily agrees with my own notion. For there is nothing which to my mind is so evident as that beauty, goodness, and other notions of which you were just now speaking have a most real and absolute existence; and I am satisfied with the proof."

"Well, but is Cebes equally satisfied? For I must convince him too."

"I think," said Simmias, "that Cebes is satisfied: although he is the most incredulous

of mortals, yet I believe that he is convinced **[77b]** of the existence of the *psūkhē* before birth. But that after death the *psūkhē* will continue to exist is not yet proven even to my own satisfaction. I cannot get rid of the feeling of the many to which Cebes was referring—the feeling that when the man dies the *psūkhē* may be scattered, and that this may be the end of it. For admitting that it may be generated and created in some other place, and may have existed before entering the human body, why after having entered in and gone out again may it not itself be destroyed and come to an end?”

[77c] “Very true, Simmias,” said Cebes; “that our *psūkhē* existed before we were born was the first half of the argument, and this appears to have been proven; that the *psūkhē* will exist after death as well as before birth is the other half of which the proof is still wanting, and has to be supplied.”

“But that proof, Simmias and Cebes, has been already given,” said Socrates, “if you put the two arguments together—I mean this and the former one, in which we admitted that everything living is born of the dead. For if the *psūkhē* existed before birth, **[77d]** and in coming to life and being born can be born only from death and dying, must it not after death continue to exist, since it has to be born again? Surely the proof which you desire has been already furnished. Still I suspect that you and Simmias would be glad to probe the argument further; like children, you are haunted with a fear that when the *psūkhē* leaves the body, the wind may really blow it away and scatter it; **[77e]** especially if a man should happen to die in stormy weather and not when the sky is calm.”

Cebes answered with a smile: “Then, Socrates you must argue us out of our fears—and yet, strictly speaking, they are not our fears, but there is a child within us to whom death is a sort of hobgoblin; him too we must persuade not to be afraid when he is alone with him in the dark.”

Socrates said, “Let the voice of the charmer be applied daily until you have charmed him away.”

[78a] “And where shall we find a good charmer of our fears, Socrates, when you are gone?”

“Hellas,” he replied, “is a large place, Cebes, and has many good men, and there are barbarous races not a few: seek for him among them all, far and wide, sparing neither pains nor money; for there is no better way of using your money. And you must not forget to seek for him among yourselves too; for he is nowhere more likely to be found.”

“The search,” replied Cebes, “shall certainly be made. And now, if you please, let us return to the point of the argument at which we digressed.”

[78b] “By all means,” replied Socrates; “what else should I please?”

“Very good,” he said.

“Must we not, said Socrates, “ask ourselves some question of this sort? What is that

which, as we imagine, is liable to be scattered away, and about which we fear? and what again is that about which we have no fear? And then we may proceed to inquire whether that which suffers dispersion is or is not of the nature of *psūkhē*—our hopes and fears as to our own *psūkhai* will turn upon that.”

“That is true,” he said.

“Now the compound **[78c]** or composite may be supposed to be naturally capable of being dissolved in like manner as of being compounded; but that which is uncompounded, and that only, must be, if anything is, indissoluble.”

“Yes; that is what I should imagine,” said Cebes.

“And the uncompounded may be assumed to be the same and unchanging, where the compound is always changing and never the same?”

“That I also think,” he said.

“Then now let us return to the previous discussion. **[78d]** Is that idea or essence, which in the dialectical process we define as essence of true existence—whether essence of equality, beauty, or anything else: are these essences, I say, liable at times to some degree of change? or are they each of them always what they are, having the same simple, self-existent and unchanging forms, and not admitting of variation at all, or in any way, or at any time?”

“They must be always the same, Socrates,” replied Cebes.

[78e] “And what would you say of the many beautiful—whether men or horses or garments or any other things which may be called equal or beautiful— are they all unchanging and the same always, or quite the reverse? May they not rather be described as almost always changing and hardly ever the same either with themselves or with one another?”

“The latter,” replied Simmias; “they are always in a state of change.”

[79a] “And these you can touch and see and perceive with the senses, but the unchanging things you can only perceive with the mind – they are invisible and are not seen?”

“That is very true,” he said.

“Well, then,” he added, “let us suppose that there are two sorts of existences, one seen, the other unseen.”

“Let us suppose them.”

“The seen is the changing, and the unseen is the unchanging. That may be also supposed. **[79b]** And, further, is not one part of us body, and the rest of us *psūkhē*?”

“To be sure.”

“And to which class may we say that the body is more alike and akin?”

“Clearly to the seen: no one can doubt that.”

“And is the *psūkhē* seen or not seen?”

“Not by man, Socrates.”

“And by ‘seen’ and ‘not seen’ is meant by us that which is or is not visible to the eye of man?”

“Yes, to the eye of man.”

“And what do we say of the *psūkhē*? is that seen or not seen?”

“Not seen.”

“Unseen then?”

“Yes.”

“Then the *psūkhē* is more like to the unseen, and the body to the seen?”

[79c] “That is most certain, Socrates.”

“And were we not saying long ago that the *psūkhē* when using the body as an instrument of perception, that is to say, when using the sense of sight or hearing or some other sense (for the meaning of perceiving through the body is perceiving through the senses)—were we not saying that the *psūkhē* too is then dragged by the body into the region of the changeable, and wanders and is confused; the world spins round it, and it is like a drunkard when under their influence?”

“Very true.”

“But when returning into itself it reflects; **[79d]** then it passes into the realm of purity, and eternity, and immortality, and unchangeableness, which are its kindred, and with them it ever lives, when it is by itself and is not let or hindered; then it ceases from its erring ways, and being in communion with the unchanging is unchanging. And this state of the *psūkhē* is called wisdom?”

“That is well and truly said, Socrates,” he replied.

“And to which class is the *psūkhē* more nearly alike and akin, **[79e]** as far as may be inferred from this argument, as well as from the preceding one?”

“I think, Socrates, that, in the opinion of everyone who follows the argument, the *psūkhē* will be infinitely more like the unchangeable—even the most stupid person will not deny that.”

“And the body is more like the changing?”

“Yes.”

“Yet once more consider the matter in this light: When the *psūkhē* [80a] and the body are united, then nature orders the *psūkhē* to rule and govern, and the body to obey and serve. Now which of these two functions is akin to the divine? and which to the mortal? Does not the divine appear to you to be that which naturally orders and rules, and the mortal that which is subject and servant?”

“True.”

“And which does the *psūkhē* resemble?”

“The *psūkhē* resembles the divine and the body the mortal—there can be no doubt of that, Socrates.”

“Then reflect, Cebes: is not the conclusion of the whole matter this?— [80b] that the *psūkhē* is in the very likeness of the divine, and immortal, and intelligible, and uniform, and indissoluble, and unchangeable; and the body is in the very likeness of the human, and mortal, and unintelligible, and multiform, and dissoluble, and changeable. Can this, my dear Cebes, be denied?”

“No, indeed.”

“But if this is true, then is not the body liable to speedy dissolution?”

“And is not the *psūkhē* almost or altogether indissoluble?”

[80c] “Certainly.”

“And do you further observe, that after a man is dead, the body, which is the visible part of man, and has a visible framework, which is called a corpse, and which would naturally be dissolved and decomposed and dissipated, is not dissolved or decomposed at once, but may remain for a good while, if the constitution be sound at the time of death, and in season [*hōrā*]? For the body when shrunk and embalmed, as is the custom in Egypt, may remain almost entire through infinite ages; and even in decay, [80d] still there are some portions, such as the bones and ligaments, which are practically indestructible. You allow that?”

“Yes.”

“And are we to suppose that the *psūkhē*, which is invisible, in passing to the true Hādēs, which like it is invisible, and pure, and noble, and on its way to the good and wise god, whither, if the god will, my *psūkhē* is also soon to go—that the *psūkhē*, I repeat, if this be its nature and origin, is blown away and perishes immediately on quitting the body as the many say? [80e] That can never be, dear Simmias and Cebes. The truth rather is that the *psūkhē* which is pure at departing draws after it no bodily taint, having never voluntarily had connection with the body, which it is ever avoiding, itself gathered into itself (for such abstraction has been the study of its life). And what does this mean but that it has been a true disciple of philosophy [81a] and has practiced how to die easily? And is not philosophy the practice of death?”

“Certainly.”

“That *psūkhē*, I say, itself invisible, departs to the invisible world to the divine and immortal and rational: thither arriving, it lives in bliss and is released from the error and folly of men, their fears and wild passions and all other human ills, and forever dwells, as they say of the initiated, in company with the gods. Is not this true, Cebes?”

“Yes,” said Cebes, “beyond a doubt.”

“But the *psūkhē* **[81b]** which has been polluted, and is impure at the time of its departure, and is the companion and servant of the body always, and is in love with and fascinated by the body and by the desires and pleasures of the body, until it is led to believe that the truth only exists in a bodily form, which a man may touch and see and taste and use for the purposes of his lusts—the *psūkhē*, I mean, accustomed to hate and fear and avoid the intellectual principle, which to the bodily eye is dark and invisible, and can be attained only by philosophy – do you suppose that such a *psūkhē* as this **[81c]** will depart pure and unalloyed?”

“That is impossible,” he replied.

“It is engrossed by the corporeal, which the continual association and constant care of the body have been made natural to it.”

“Very true.”

“And this, my friend, may be conceived to be that heavy, weighty, earthy element of sight by which such a *psūkhē* is depressed and dragged down again into the visible world, because it is afraid of the invisible and of the world below— **[81d]** prowling about tombs and sepulchres, in the neighborhood of which, as they tell us, are seen certain ghostly apparitions of *psūkhai* which have not departed pure, but are cloyed with sight and therefore visible.”

“That is very likely, Socrates.”

“Yes, that is very likely, Cebes; and these must be the *psūkhai*, not of the good, but of the evil, who are compelled to wander about such places in payment of the penalty of their former evil way of life; **[81e]** and they continue to wander until the desire which haunts them is satisfied and they are imprisoned in another body. And they may be supposed to be fixed in the same natures which they had in their former life.”

“What natures do you mean, Socrates?”

“I mean to say that men who have followed after gluttony, and wantonness, and drunkenness, and have had no thought of avoiding them, would pass into asses and animals of that sort. **[82a]** What do you think?”

“I think that exceedingly probable.”

“And those who have chosen the portion of injustice, and tyranny, and violence, will

pass into wolves, or into hawks and kites; whither else can we suppose them to go?"

"Yes," said Cebes; "that is doubtless the place of natures such as theirs."

"And there is no difficulty," he said, "in assigning to all of them places answering to their several natures and propensities?"

"There is not," he said.

"Even among them some are happier than others; and the happiest both in themselves and their place of abode are those who have practiced the civil and social virtues which are called temperance and justice, **[82b]** and are acquired by habit and attention without philosophy and mind."

"Why are they the happiest?"

"Because they may be expected to pass into some gentle, social nature which is like their own, such as that of bees or ants, or even back again into the form of man, and just and moderate men spring from them."

"That is not impossible."

"But he who is a philosopher or lover of learning, and is entirely pure at departing, **[82c]** is alone permitted to reach the gods. And this is the reason, Simmias and Cebes, why the true votaries of philosophy abstain from all fleshly lusts, and endure and refuse to give themselves up to them—not because they fear poverty or the ruin of their families, like the lovers of money, and the world in general; nor like the lovers of power and honor, because they dread the dishonor or disgrace of evil deeds."

"No, Socrates, that would not become them," said Cebes.

"No, indeed," he replied; **[82d]** "and therefore they who have a care of their *psūkhai*, and do not merely live in the fashions of the body, say farewell to all this; they will not walk in the ways of the blind: and when philosophy offers them purification and release from evil, they feel that they ought not to resist its influence, and to it they incline, and whither it leads they follow it."

"What do you mean, Socrates?"

"I will tell you," he said. "The lovers of knowledge are conscious that their *psūkhai*, when philosophy receives them, **[82e]** are simply fastened and glued to their bodies: the *psūkhē* is only able to view existence through the bars of a prison, and not in its own nature; it is wallowing in the mire of all ignorance; and philosophy, seeing the terrible nature of its confinement, and that the captive through desire is led **[83a]** to conspire in its own captivity (for the lovers of knowledge are aware that this was the original state of the *psūkhē*, and that when it was in this state philosophy received and gently counseled [*paramutheîsthai* = divert by way of *mūthos*] it, and wanted to release it, pointing out to it that the eye is full of deceit, and also the ear and other senses, and persuading it to retire from them in all but the necessary use of them and to be gathered up and collected into itself, and to trust only to **[83b]** itself and its

own intuitions of absolute existence, and mistrust that which comes to it through others and is subject to vicissitude) – philosophy shows it that this is visible and tangible, but that what it sees in its own nature is intellectual and invisible. And the *psūkhē* of the true philosopher thinks that it ought not to resist this deliverance, and therefore abstains from pleasures and desires and pains and fears, as far as it is able; reflecting that when a man has great joys or sorrows or fears or desires he suffers from them, not the sort of evil which might be anticipated—as, for example, the loss of his health or property, **[83c]** which he has sacrificed to his lusts—but he has suffered an evil greater far, which is the greatest and worst of all evils, and one of which he never thinks.”

“And what is that, Socrates?” said Cebes.

“Why, this: when the feeling of pleasure or pain in the *psūkhē* is most intense, all of us naturally suppose that the object of this intense feeling is then plainest and truest: but this is not the case.”

[83d] “Very true.”

“And this is the state in which the *psūkhē* is most enthralled by the body.”

“How is that?”

“Why, because each pleasure and pain is a sort of nail which nails and rivets the *psūkhē* to the body, and engrosses it and makes it believe that thing to be true which the body affirms to be true; and from agreeing with the body and having the same delights it is obliged to have the same habits and ways, and is not likely ever to be pure at its departure to the world below, but is always saturated with the body; so that it soon sinks into another body **[83e]** and there germinates and grows, and has therefore no part in the communion of the divine and pure and simple.”

“That is most true, Socrates,” answered Cebes.

“And this, Cebes, is the reason why the true lovers of knowledge are temperate and brave; and not for the reason which the world gives.”

[84a] “Certainly not.”

“Certainly not! For not in that way does the *psūkhē* of a philosopher reason; it will not ask philosophy to release it in order that when released it may deliver itself up again to the thralldom of pleasures and pains, doing a work only to be undone again, weaving instead of unweaving its Penelope's web. But it will make itself a calm of passion and follow Reason, and dwell in it, beholding the true and divine (which is not matter of opinion), and thence derive nourishment. **[84b]** Thus it seeks to live while it lives, and after death it hopes to go to its own kindred and to be freed from human ills. Never fear, Simmias and Cebes, that a *psūkhē* which has been thus nurtured and has had these pursuits, will at its departure from the body be scattered and blown away by the winds and be nowhere and nothing.”

When Socrates had done speaking, for a considerable time there was silence; **[84c]**

he himself and most of us appeared to be meditating on what had been said; only Cebes and Simmias spoke a few words to one another. And Socrates observing this asked them what they thought of the argument, and whether there was anything wanting.

“For,” said he, “much is still open to suspicion and attack, if anyone were disposed to sift the matter thoroughly. If you are talking of something else I would rather not interrupt you, but if you are still doubtful about the argument **[84d]** do not hesitate to say exactly what you think, and let us have anything better which you can suggest; and if I am likely to be of any use, allow me to help you.”

Simmias said, “I must confess, Socrates, that doubts did arise in our minds, and each of us was urging and inciting the other to put the question which he wanted to have answered and which neither of us liked to ask, fearing that our importunity might be troublesome under present circumstances.”

When he heard Socrates laughed in a measured way and said: **[84e]** “Well, well, Simmias, so I guess I am not very likely to persuade other people that I do not regard my present situation as a misfortune, if I am unable to persuade even you, and if you keep worrying whether I am at all more troubled now than I was in my earlier phase of life—and whether I am inferior to swans [*kuknoi*] in my prophetic [*mantikē*] capacity. It seems that swans, when they get the feeling that they must die, even though they were singing throughout their earlier phase of life, **[85a]** will now sing more and better than ever, rejoicing in the thought that they are about to go away to the god whose attendants [*therapōn* plural] they are. But humans, because of their fear of death, tell lies about the swans [*kuknoi*], claiming that swans are lamenting [*thrēneîn*] their own death when they sing their hearts out in sorrow. So, humans are not taking into account the fact that no bird sings when it is hungry or cold or experiences some other such pain—not even the nightingale herself or the swallow or the hoopoe. All these birds are said to be singing in their sorrow because they have something to lament. But I do not believe that these birds sing because of some sorrow—and I do not believe it about the swans [*kuknoi*], either. **[85b]** Rather, as I believe, it is because swans are sacred to Apollo and have a prophetic [*mantikē*] capacity and foresee the good things that will happen in the house of Hādēs—that is why they sing and rejoice in that [last] day of theirs more than they ever did in the previous time of their life. And I, too, think of myself as the consecrated [*hieros*] agent of the same god, and a fellow temple-servant [*homo-doulos*] with the swans [*kuknoi*], and, thinking that I have received from my master [*despotēs*] a prophetic [*mantikē*] capacity that is not inferior to theirs, I would not part from life in a less happy state of mind [*thūmos*] than the swans. And it is for this reason that you must speak and ask whatever questions you want, so long as the Athenian people’s Board of Eleven allows it.”

“Well, Socrates,” said Simmias, **[85c]** “then I will tell you my difficulty, and Cebes will tell you his. For I dare say that you, Socrates, feel, as I do, how very hard or almost impossible is the attainment of any certainty about questions such as these in the present life. And yet I should deem him a coward who did not prove what is said about them to the uttermost, or whose heart failed him before he had examined them on every side. For he should persevere until he has attained one of two things: either he should discover or learn the truth about them; or, if this is impossible, I would have

him take the best and most irrefragable of human notions, **[85d]** and let this be the raft upon which he sails through life—not without risk, as I admit, if he cannot find some word of the god which will more surely and safely carry him. And now, as you bid me, I will venture to question you, as I should not like to reproach myself hereafter with not having said at the time what I think. For when I consider the matter either alone or with Cebes, the argument does certainly appear to me, Socrates, to be not sufficient.”

[85e] Socrates answered: “I dare say, my friend, that you may be right, but I should like to know in what respect the argument is not sufficient.”

“In this respect,” replied Simmias: “might not a person use the same argument about tuning [*harmonia*] and the lyre—might he not say that tuning [*harmonia*] is a thing invisible, incorporeal, fair, divine, **[86a]** abiding in the lyre which is tuned, but that the lyre and the strings are matter and material, composite, earthy, and akin to mortality? And when someone breaks the lyre, or cuts and rends the strings, then he who takes this view would argue as you do, and on the same analogy, that the tuning [*harmonia*] survives and has not perished; for you cannot imagine, as we would say, that the lyre without the strings, and the broken strings themselves, remain, and yet that the tuning [*harmonia*], **[86b]** which is of godly and immortal nature and kindred, has perished – and perished too before the mortal. The tuning [*harmonia*], he would say, certainly exists somewhere, and the wood and strings will decay before that decays. For I suspect, Socrates, that the notion of the *psūkhē* which we are all of us inclined to entertain, would also be yours, and that you too would conceive the body to be strung up, and held together, by the elements of hot and cold, wet and dry, and the like, **[86c]** and that the *psūkhē* is the tuning [*harmonia*] or due proportionate admixture of them. And, if this is true, the inference clearly is that when the strings of the body are unduly loosened or overstrained through disorder or other injury, then the *psūkhē*, though most divine, like other tunings [*harmoniai*] of music or of the works of art, of course perishes at once, although the material remains of the body may last for a considerable time, **[86d]** until they are either decayed or burnt. Now if anyone maintained that the *psūkhē*, being the tuning [*harmonia*] of the elements of the body, first perishes in that which is called death, how shall we answer him?”

Socrates looked round at us as his manner was, and said, with a smile: “Simmias has reason on his side; and why does not some one of you who is abler than myself answer him? For there is force in his attack upon me. **[86e]** But perhaps, before we answer him, we had better also hear what Cebes has to say against the argument—this will give us time for reflection, and when both of them have spoken, we may either assent to them if their words appear to be in consonance with the truth, or if not, we may take up the other side, and argue with them. Please to tell me then, Cebes,” he said, “what was the difficulty which troubled you?”

Cebes said, “I will tell you. My feeling is that the argument is still in the same position, and open to the same objections which were urged before; **[87a]** for I am ready to admit that the existence of the *psūkhē* before entering into the bodily form has been very ingeniously, and, as I may be allowed to say, quite sufficiently proven; but the existence of the *psūkhē* after death is still, in my judgment, unproven. Now my objection is not the same as that of Simmias; for I am not disposed to deny that the *psūkhē* is stronger and more lasting than the body, being of opinion that in all such

respects the *psūkhē* very far excels the body. Well, then, says the argument to me, why do you remain unconvinced? When you see that the weaker is still in existence after the man is dead, **[87b]** will you not admit that the more lasting must also be saved [*sōzein*] during the same period of time? Now I, like Simmias, must employ a figure; and I shall ask you to consider whether the figure is to the point. The parallel which I will suppose is that of an old weaver, who dies, and after his death somebody says: he is not dead, he must have been saved [= *sōzein*]; and he appeals to the coat which he himself wove and wore, and which is still whole and undecayed. And then he proceeds to ask of someone who is incredulous, **[87c]** whether a man lasts longer, or the coat which is in use and wear; and when he is answered that a man lasts far longer, thinks that he has thus certainly demonstrated the survival of the man, who is the more lasting, because the less lasting remains. But that, Simmias, as I would beg you to observe, is not the truth; everyone sees that he who talks thus is talking nonsense. For the truth is that this weaver, having worn and woven many such coats, **[87d]** though he outlived several of them, was himself outlived by the last; but this is surely very far from proving that a man is slighter and weaker than a coat. Now the relation of the body to the *psūkhē* may be expressed in a similar figure; for you may say with reason that the *psūkhē* is lasting, and the body weak and short-lived in comparison. And every *psūkhē* may be said to wear out many bodies, especially in the course of a long life. For if while the man is alive the body deliquesces and decays, **[87e]** and yet the *psūkhē* always weaves its garment anew and repairs the waste, then of course, when the *psūkhē* perishes, it must have on its last garment, and this only will survive it; but then again when the *psūkhē* is dead the body will at last show its native weakness, and soon pass into decay. And therefore this is an argument on which I would rather not rely **[88a]** as proving that the *psūkhē* exists after death. For suppose that we grant even more than you affirm as within the range of possibility, and besides acknowledging that the *psūkhē* existed before birth admit also that after death the *psūkhē* of some are existing still, and will exist, and will be born and die again and again, and that there is a natural strength in the *psūkhē* which will hold out and be born many times—for all this, we may be still inclined to think that it will weary in the labors of successive births, and may at last succumb in one of its deaths and utterly perish; **[88b]** and this death and dissolution of the body which brings destruction to the *psūkhē* may be unknown to any of us, for no one of us can have had any experience of it: and if this be true, then I say that he who is confident in death has but a foolish confidence, unless he is able to prove that the *psūkhē* is altogether immortal and imperishable. But if he is not able to prove this, he who is about to die will always have reason to fear that when the body is disunited, the *psūkhē* also may utterly perish.”

All of us, as we afterwards remarked to one another, **[88c]** had an unpleasant feeling at hearing them say this. When we had been so firmly convinced before, now to have our faith shaken seemed to introduce a confusion and uncertainty, not only into the previous argument, but into any future one; either we were not good judges, or there were no real grounds of belief.

Echecrates

I swear by the gods, Phaedo, I myself now feel totally the same way as you people felt back then. I mean, as I am now listening to you saying the kinds of things you are saying, this is the thought that comes to me: **[88d]** “What argument [*logos*] can we ever trust again? For what could be more trustworthy than the argument [*logos*] of

Socrates, which has now fallen into the status of untrustworthiness?" You see, the argument [*logos*] that the soul [*psūkhē*] is some kind of a tuning [*harmoniā*] has always been wonderfully attractive to me, and, when this argument was put into words, it was as if it connected me in my thinking with the fact that these things had been figured out earlier by me as well. And now I am in need of finding some other argument [*logos*], starting all the way back from the beginning—some argument that will make me believe that, when someone dies, the soul [*psūkhē*] does not die along with that someone. Tell me, for Zeus' sake, tell me! How did Socrates follow up on the argument [*logos*] [of Simmias and Cebes]? **[88e]** Did he too get visibly upset, the same way you say that you all got upset? Or was he not upset and instead responded calmly to the cry for help and ran to the rescue [*boētheîn*] of the argument [*logos*]? And did he respond and run to the rescue [*boētheîn*] in a way that was sufficient or defective? Go through for us everything that happened, as accurately as you can.

Phaedo

I tell you, Echecrates: as often as I have admired Socrates, I have never been so awed by him as I was when I was there at that moment. **[89a]** The fact that he had something to say in response was perhaps nothing all that unusual, but the thing that really astounded me was, first, how gently and pleasantly and respectfully he received the argument [*logos*] of the young men [Simmias and Cebes], and, second, how acutely he sensed that we all had suffered injury from the arguments [*logoi*] [of Simmias and Cebes], and then, how well he healed us of our sufferings. It was as if he were calling out to us, fleeing and defeated as we were, urging us to follow him and to take another good look at our argument [*logos*].

Echecrates

And how did he do that?

Phaedo

I will tell you. You see, I happened to be seated close to him, at his right hand. I was sitting on a kind of stool, |89b while he was lying on a couch that was quite a bit higher than where I was. So then he stroked my head and fondled the locks of hair along my neck—he had this way of playing with my hair whenever he had a chance. And then he said: "Tomorrow, Phaedo, you will perhaps be cutting off these beautiful locks of yours?"

"Yes, Socrates," I replied, "I guess I will."

He shot back: "No you will not, if you listen to me."

"So, what will I do?" I said.

He replied: "Not tomorrow but today I will cut off my own hair and you too will cut off these locks of yours—if our argument [*logos*] comes to an end [*teleutân*] for us and we cannot bring it back to life again [*ana-biōsasthai*]. **[89c]** Moreover, if I were you and the argument [*logos*] eluded me, I would make an oath and bind myself to it, as the men of Argos had done once upon a time, that I would not wear my hair long until I win in renewed battle against the argument [*logos*] of Simmias and Cebes."

"Yes," I said, "but even Hēraklēs is said not to be a match for two opponents."

"Then summon me," he said, "as your Iolaos, so long as there is still sunlight before the sun sets."

"Then I summon you," I said, "not as Hēraklēs summons Iolaos: rather, I summon you the same way as Iolaos summons Hēraklēs."

"That will be all the same," he said. "But first let us take care that we avoid a danger."

"And what is that?" I said.

[89d] "The danger of becoming misologists," he replied, "which is one of the very worst things that can happen to us. For as there are misanthropists or haters of men, there are also misologists or haters of ideas, and both spring from the same cause, which is ignorance of the world. Misanthropy arises from the too great confidence of inexperience; you trust a man and think him altogether true and good and faithful, and then in a little while he turns out to be false and knavish; and then another and another, and when this has happened several times to a man, especially within the circle of his most trusted friends, as he deems them, **[89e]** and he has often quarreled with them, he at last hates all men, and believes that no one has any good in him at all. I dare say that you must have observed this."

"Yes," I said.

"And is not this discreditable? The reason is that a man, having to deal with other men, has no knowledge of them; for if he had knowledge he would have known the true state of the case, that few are the good and few the evil, **[90a]** and that the great majority are in the interval between them."

"How do you mean?" I said.

"I mean," he replied, "as you might say of the very large and very small, that nothing is more uncommon than a very large or a very small man; and this applies generally to all extremes, whether of great and small, or swift and slow, or fair and foul, or black and white: and whether the instances you select be men or dogs or anything else, few are the extremes, but many are in the mean between them. Did you never observe this?"

"Yes," I said, "I have."

"And do you not imagine," **[90b]** he said, "that if there were a competition [*agōn*] of evil, the first in evil would be found to be very few?"

"Yes, that is very likely," I said.

"Yes, that is very likely," he replied; "not that in this respect arguments are like men—there I was led on by you to say more than I had intended; but the point of comparison was that when a simple man who has no skill in dialectics believes an argument to be true which he afterwards imagines to be false, whether really false or

not, and then another and another, he has no longer any faith left, **[90c]** and great disputers, as you know, come to think, at last that they have grown to be the wisest of mankind; for they alone perceive the utter unsoundness and instability of all arguments, or, indeed, of all things, which, like the currents in the Euripus, are going up and down in never-ceasing ebb and flow."

"That is quite true," I said.

"Yes, Phaedo," he replied, "and very melancholy too, if there be such a thing as truth or certainty or power of knowing at all, **[90d]** that a man should have lighted upon some argument or other which at first seemed true and then turned out to be false, and instead of blaming himself and his own want of wit, because he is annoyed, should at last be too glad to transfer the blame from himself to arguments in general; and forever afterwards should hate and revile them, and lose the truth and knowledge of existence."

"Yes, indeed," I said, "that is very melancholy."

"Let us, then, in the first place," he said, **[90e]** "be careful of admitting into our *psūkhai* the notion that there is no truth or health or soundness in any arguments at all; but let us rather say that there is as yet no health in us, and that we must quit ourselves like men and do our best to gain health— you and all other men with a view to the whole of your future life, **[91a]** and I myself with a view to death. For at this moment I am sensible that I have not the temper of a philosopher; like the vulgar, I am only a partisan. For the partisan, when he is engaged in a dispute, cares nothing about the rights of the question, but is anxious only to convince his hearers of his own assertions. And the difference between him and me at the present moment is only this—that whereas he seeks to convince his hearers that what he says is true, I am rather seeking to convince myself; to convince my hearers is a secondary matter with me. **[91b]** And do but see how much I gain by this. For if what I say is true, then I do well to be persuaded of the truth, but if there be nothing after death, still, during the short time that remains, I shall save my friends from lamentations, and my ignorance will not last, and therefore no harm will be done. This is the state of mind, Simmias and Cebes, in which I approach the argument. **[91c]** And I would ask you to be thinking of the truth and not of Socrates: agree with me, if I seem to you to be speaking the truth; or if not, withstand me might and main, that I may not deceive you as well as myself in my enthusiasm, and, like the bee, leave my sting in you before I die.

"And now let us proceed," he said. "And first of all let me be sure that I have in my mind what you were saying. Simmias, if I remember rightly, has fears and misgivings whether the *psūkhē*, being in the form of tuning [*harmonia*], although a fairer and diviner thing than the body, **[91d]** may not perish first. On the other hand, Cebes appeared to grant that the *psūkhē* was more lasting than the body, but he said that no one could know whether the *psūkhē*, after having worn out many bodies, might not perish itself and leave its last body behind it; and that this is death, which is the destruction not of the body but of the *psūkhē*, for in the body the work of destruction is ever going on. Are not these, Simmias and Cebes, the points which we have to consider?"

[91e] They both agreed to this statement of them.

He proceeded: "And did you deny the force of the whole preceding argument, or of a part only?"

"Of a part only," they replied.

"And what did you think," he said, "of that part of the argument in which we said that knowledge was recollection only, and inferred from this that the *psūkhē* must have previously existed somewhere else [92a] before it was enclosed in the body?"

Cebes said that he had been wonderfully impressed by that part of the argument, and that his conviction remained unshaken. Simmias agreed, and added that he himself could hardly imagine the possibility of his ever thinking differently about that.

"But," rejoined Socrates, "you will have to think differently, my Theban friend, if you still maintain that tuning [*harmonia*] is a compound, and that the *psūkhē* is a tuning [*harmonia*] which is made out of strings set in the frame of the body; [92b] for you will surely never allow yourself to say that a tuning [*harmonia*] is prior to the elements which compose the tuning [*harmonia*]."

"No, Socrates, that is impossible."

"But do you not see that you are saying this when you say that the *psūkhē* existed before it took the form and body of man, and was made up of elements which as yet had no existence? For tuning [*harmonia*] is not a sort of thing like the *psūkhē*, as you suppose; but first the lyre, and the strings, and the sounds [92c] exist in a state of being out of tune, and then tuning [*harmonia*] is made last of all, and perishes first. And how can such a notion of the *psūkhē* as this agree with the other?"

"Not at all," replied Simmias.

"And yet," he said, "there surely ought to be tuning [*harmonia*] when tuning [*harmonia*] is the theme of discourse."

"There ought," replied Simmias.

"But there is no tuning [*harmonia*]," he said, "in the two propositions that knowledge is recollection, and that the *psūkhē* is a tuning [*harmonia*]. Which of them, then, will you retain?"

"I think," he replied, "that I have a much stronger faith, Socrates, in the first of the two, which has been fully demonstrated to me, than in the latter, which has not been demonstrated at all, [92d] but rests only on probable and plausible grounds; and I know too well that these arguments from probabilities are impostors, and unless great caution is observed in the use of them they are apt to be deceptive— in geometry, and in other things too. But the doctrine of knowledge and recollection has been proven to me on trustworthy grounds; and the proof was that the *psūkhē* must have existed before it came into the body, because to it belongs the essence of which the very name implies existence. [92e] Having, as I am convinced, rightly accepted this conclusion, and on sufficient grounds, I must, as I suppose, cease to argue or allow others to argue that the *psūkhē* is a tuning [*harmonia*]."

"Let me put the matter, Simmias," he said, "in another point of view: do you imagine that a tuning [*harmonia*] or any other composition can be in a state other than **[93a]** that of the elements out of which it is compounded?"

"Certainly not."

"Or do or suffer anything other than they do or suffer?"

He agreed.

"Then a tuning [*harmonia*] does not lead the parts or elements which make up the tuning [*harmonia*], but only follows them."

He assented.

"For tuning [*harmonia*] cannot possibly have any motion, or sound, or other quality which is opposed to the parts."

"That would be impossible," he replied. "And does not every tuning [*harmonia*] depend upon the manner in which the elements are harmonized?"

"I do not understand you," he said.

"I mean to say that a tuning [*harmonia*] admits of degrees, and is more of a tuning [*harmonia*], **[93b]** and more completely a tuning [*harmonia*], when more completely harmonized, if that be possible; and less of a tuning [*harmonia*], and less completely a tuning [*harmonia*], when less harmonized."

"True."

"But does the *psūkhē* admit of degrees, such that one *psūkhē* in the very least degree more or less, or more or less completely, a *psūkhē* than another?"

"Not in the least."

"Yet surely one *psūkhē* is said to have intelligence and virtue, and to be good, and another *psūkhē* is said to have folly and vice, and to be an evil *psūkhē*: and this is said truly?"

[93c] "Yes, truly."

"But what will those who maintain the *psūkhē* to be a tuning [*harmonia*] say of this presence of virtue and vice in the *psūkhē*? Will they say that there is another state of being in tune [*harmonia*], and another state of being out of tune, and that the virtuous *psūkhē* is tuned, and itself being a tuning [*harmonia*] has another tuning [*harmonia*] within it, and that the vicious *psūkhē* is untuned and has no tuning [*harmonia*] within it?"

"I cannot say," replied Simmias; "but I suppose that something of that kind would be asserted by those who take this view."

"And the admission is already made **[93d]** that no *psūkhē* is more a *psūkhē* than another; and this is equivalent to admitting that tuning [*harmonia*] is not more or less tuning [*harmonia*], or more or less completely a tuning [*harmonia*]?"

"Quite true. And that which is not more or less a tuning [*harmonia*] is not more or less harmonized?"

"True."

"And that which is not more or less harmonized cannot have more or less of tuning [*harmonia*], but only an equal tuning [*harmonia*]?"

"Yes, an equal tuning [*harmonia*]."

"Then one *psūkhē* not being more or less absolutely a *psūkhē* than another, **[93e]** is not more or less harmonized?"

"Exactly."

"And therefore has neither more nor less of tuning [*harmonia*] or of being out of tune? She has not. And having neither more nor less of tuning [*harmonia*] or of being out of tune, one *psūkhē* has no more vice or virtue than another, if vice be the state of being out of tune and virtue the state of being in tune [*harmonia*]?"

"Not at all more."

"Or speaking more correctly, Simmias, the *psūkhē*, if it is a tuning [*harmonia*], **[94a]** will never have any vice; because a tuning [*harmonia*], being absolutely a tuning [*harmonia*], has no part in that which is out of tune?"

"No."

"And therefore a *psūkhē* which is absolutely a *psūkhē* has no vice?"

"How can it have, consistently with the preceding argument?"

"Then, according to this, if the *psūkhai* of all animals are equally and absolutely *psūkhai*, they will be equally good?"

"I agree with you, Socrates," he said.

[94b] "And can all this be true, think you," he said, "and are all these consequences admissible—which nevertheless seem to follow from the assumption that the *psūkhē* is a tuning [*harmonia*]?"

"Certainly not," he said.

"Once more," he said, "what ruling principle is there of human things other than the *psūkhē*, and especially the wise *psūkhē*? Do you know of any?"

"Indeed, I do not."

"And is the *psūkhē* in agreement with the affections of the body? or is it at variance with them? For example, when the body is hot and thirsty, does not the *psūkhē* incline us against drinking? and when the body is hungry, against eating? And this is only one instance **[94c]** out of ten thousand of the opposition of the *psūkhē* to the things of the body."

"Very true."

"But we have already acknowledged that the *psūkhē*, being a tuning [*harmonia*], can never utter a note at variance with the tensions and relaxations and vibrations and other affections of the strings out of which it is composed; it can only follow, it cannot lead them?"

"Yes," he said, "we acknowledged that, certainly."

"And yet do we not now discover the *psūkhē* to be doing the exact opposite—leading the elements of which it is believed to be composed; **[94d]** almost always opposing and coercing them in all sorts of ways throughout life, sometimes more violently with the pains of medicine and gymnastic; then again more gently; threatening and also reprimanding the desires, passions, fears, as if talking to a thing which is not itself, as Homer in the *Odyssey* represents Odysseus doing in the words, 'He beat his breast, and reproached his heart with this utterance [*mūthos*]: "Endure, my heart; far worse have thou endured!"' **[94e]** Do you think that Homer could have composed this under the idea that the *psūkhē* is a tuning [*harmonia*] capable of being led by the affections of the body, and not rather of a nature which leads and masters them; and itself a far diviner thing than any tuning [*harmonia*]?"

"Yes, Socrates, I quite agree to that."

"Then, my friend, we can never be right in saying that the *psūkhē* is a tuning [*harmonia*], for that would clearly **[95a]** contradict the divine Homer as well as ourselves."

"True," he said.

"Thus much," said Socrates, "of Harmonia, your Theban goddess, Cebes, who has not been ungracious to us, I think; but what shall I say to the Theban Kadmos, and how shall I propitiate him?"

"I think that you will discover a way of propitiating him," said Cebes; "I am sure that you have answered the argument about tuning [*harmonia*] in a manner that I could never have expected. For when Simmias mentioned his objection, I quite imagined that no answer could be given to him, **[95b]** and therefore I was surprised at finding that his argument could not sustain the first onset of yours; and not impossibly the other, whom you call Kadmos, may share a similar fate."

"Nay, my good friend," said Socrates, "let us not boast, lest some evil eye should put to flight the word which I am about to speak. That, however, may be left in the hands

of those above, while I draw near in Homeric fashion, and try the mettle of your words. Briefly, the sum of your objection is as follows: you want to have proven to you that the *psūkhē* is imperishable **[95c]** and immortal, and you think that the philosopher who is confident in death has but a vain and foolish confidence, if he thinks that he will fare better than one who has led another sort of life, in the world below, unless he can prove this; and you say that the demonstration of the strength and divinity of the *psūkhē*, and of its existence prior to our becoming men, does not necessarily imply its immortality. Granting that the *psūkhē* is long-lived, and has known and done much in a former state, still it is not on that account immortal; **[95d]** and its entrance into the human form may be a sort of disease which is the beginning of dissolution, and may at last, after the toils of life are over, end in that which is called death. And whether the *psūkhē* enters into the body once only or many times, that, as you would say, makes no difference in the fears of individuals. For any man, who is not devoid of natural feeling, has reason to fear, if he has no knowledge or proof of the *psūkhē*'s immortality. **[95e]** That is what I suppose you to say, Cebes, which I designedly repeat, in order that nothing may escape us, and that you may, if you wish, add or subtract anything."

"But," said Cebes, "as far as I can see at present, I have nothing to add or subtract; you have expressed my meaning."

Socrates paused awhile, and seemed to be absorbed in reflection. At length he said, "This is a very serious inquiry which you are raising, Cebes, involving the whole question of generation and corruption, **[96a]** about which I will, if you like, give you my own experience; and you can apply this, if you think that anything which I say will avail towards the solution of your difficulty."

"I should very much like," said Cebes, "to hear what you have to say."

"Then I will tell you," said Socrates. "When I was young, Cebes, I had a prodigious desire to know that department of philosophy which is called Natural Science; this appeared to me to have lofty aims, as being the science which has to do with the causes of things, and which teaches why a thing is, and is created and destroyed; **[96b]** and I was always agitating myself with the consideration of such questions as these: Is the growth of animals the result of some decay which the hot and cold principle contracts, as some have said? Is the blood the element with which we think, or the air, or the fire? or perhaps nothing of this sort – but the brain may be the originating power of the perceptions of hearing and sight and smell, and memory and opinion may come from them, and science may be based on memory and opinion when no longer in motion, but at rest. And then I went on to examine the decay of them, **[96c]** and then to the things of the sky above and the earth below, and at last I concluded that I was wholly incapable of these inquiries, as I will satisfactorily prove to you. For I was fascinated by them to such a degree that my eyes grew blind to things that I had seemed to myself, and also to others, to know quite well; and I forgot what I had before thought to be self-evident, that the growth of man is the result of eating and drinking; **[96d]** for when by the digestion of food flesh is added to flesh and bone to bone, and whenever there is an aggregation of congenial elements, the lesser bulk becomes larger and the small man greater. Was not that a reasonable notion?"

"Yes," said Cebes, "I think so."

"Well; but let me tell you something more. There was a time when I thought that I understood the meaning of greater and less pretty well; and when I saw a great man standing by a little one I fancied that one was taller than the other by a head; **[96e]** or one horse would appear to be greater than another horse: and still more clearly did I seem to perceive that ten is two more than eight, and that two cubits are more than one, because two is twice one."

"And what is now your notion of such matters?" said Cebes.

"I should be far enough from imagining," he replied, "that I knew the cause of any of them, indeed I should, for I cannot satisfy myself that when one is added to one, the one to which the addition is made becomes two, **[97a]** or that the two units added together make two by reason of the addition. For I cannot understand how, when separated from the other, each of them was one and not two, and now, when they are brought together, the mere juxtaposition of them can be the cause of their becoming two: nor can I understand how the division of one is the way to make two; for then a different cause **[97b]** would produce the same effect—as in the former instance the addition and juxtaposition of one to one was the cause of two, in this the separation and subtraction of one from the other would be the cause. Nor am I any longer satisfied that I understand the reason why one or anything else either is generated or destroyed or is at all, but I have in my mind some confused notion of another method, and can never admit this.

"Then I heard someone who had a book of Anaxagoras, as he said, **[97c]** out of which he read that mind was the disposer and cause of all, and I was quite delighted at the notion of this, which appeared admirable, and I said to myself: If mind is the disposer, mind will dispose all for the best, and put each particular in the best place; and I argued that if anyone desired to find out the cause of the generation or destruction or existence of anything, he must find out what state of being or suffering or doing was best for that thing, **[97d]** and therefore a man had only to consider the best for himself and others, and then he would also know the worse, for that the same science comprised both. And I rejoiced to think that I had found in Anaxagoras a teacher of the causes of existence such as I desired, and I imagined that he would tell me first whether the earth is flat or round; **[97e]** and then he would further explain the cause and the necessity of this, and would teach me the nature of the best and show that this was best; and if he said that the earth was in the center, he would explain that this position was the best, and I should be satisfied if this were shown to me, **[98a]** and not want any other sort of cause. And I thought that I would then go and ask him about the sun and moon and stars, and that he would explain to me their comparative swiftness, and their returnings and various states, and how their several affections, active and passive, were all for the best. For I could not imagine that when he spoke of mind as the disposer of them, he would give any other account of their being as they are, except that this was best; **[98b]** and I thought when he had explained to me in detail the cause of each and the cause of all, he would go on to explain to me what was best for each and what was best for all. I had hopes which I would not have sold for much, and I seized the books and read them as fast as I could in my eagerness to know the better and the worse.

“What hopes I had formed, and how grievously was I disappointed! As I proceeded, I found my philosopher altogether forsaking mind **[98c]** or any other principle of order, but having recourse to air, and ether, and water, and other eccentricities. I might compare him to a person who began by maintaining generally that mind is the cause of the actions of Socrates, but who, when he endeavored to explain the causes of my several actions in detail, went on to show that I sit here because my body is made up of bones and muscles; and the bones, as he would say, are hard and have ligaments which divide them, **[98d]** and the muscles are elastic, and they cover the bones, which have also a covering or environment of flesh and skin which contains them; and as the bones are lifted at their joints by the contraction or relaxation of the muscles, I am able to bend my limbs, and this is why I am sitting here in a curved posture: that is what he would say, and he would have a similar explanation of my talking to you, which he would attribute to sound, and air, and hearing, and he would assign ten thousand other causes of the same sort, **[98e]** forgetting to mention the true cause, which is that the Athenians have thought fit to condemn me, and accordingly I have thought it better and more right to remain here and undergo my sentence; **[99a]** for I am inclined to think that these muscles and bones of mine would have gone off to Megara or Boeotia—by the dog of Egypt they would, if they had been guided only by their own idea of what was best, and if I had not chosen as the better and nobler part, instead of playing truant and running away, to undergo any punishment which the State inflicts. There is surely a strange confusion of causes and conditions in all this. It may be said, indeed, that without bones and muscles and the other parts of the body I cannot execute my purposes. But to say that I do as I do because of them, **[99b]** and that this is the way in which mind acts, and not from the choice of the best, is a very careless and idle mode of speaking. I wonder that they cannot distinguish the cause from the condition, which the many, feeling about in the dark, are always mistaking and misnaming. And thus one man makes a vortex all round and steadies the earth by the sky; another gives the air as a support to the earth, which is a sort of broad trough. **[99c]** Any power which in disposing them as they are disposes them for the best never enters into their minds, nor do they imagine that there is the power of a *daimōn* in that; they rather expect to find another Atlas of the world who is stronger and more everlasting and more containing than the good is, and are clearly of opinion that the obligatory and containing power of the good is as nothing; and yet this is the principle which I would want to learn if anyone would teach me. But as I have failed either to discover myself or to learn of anyone else, **[99d]** the nature of the best, I will exhibit to you, if you like, what I have found to be the second best mode of inquiring into the cause.”

“I should very much like to hear that,” he replied.

Socrates proceeded: “I thought that as I had failed in the contemplation of true existence, I ought to be careful that I did not lose the eye of my *psūkhē*; as people may injure their bodily eye by observing and gazing on the sun during an eclipse, unless they take the precaution of only looking at the image reflected in the water, **[99e]** or in some similar medium. That occurred to me, and I was afraid that my *psūkhē* might be blinded altogether if I looked at things with my eyes or tried by the help of the senses to apprehend them. And I thought that I had better have recourse to ideas, and seek in them the truth of existence. I dare say that the simile **[100a]** is not perfect—for I am very far from admitting that he who contemplates existence through the medium of ideas sees them only as an image, any more than he who sees

them in their working and effects. However, this was the method which I adopted: I first assumed some principle which I judged to be the strongest, and then I affirmed as true whatever seemed to agree with this, whether relating to the cause or to anything else; and that which disagreed I regarded as untrue. But I should like to explain my meaning clearly, as I do not think that you understand me."

"No, indeed," replied Cebes, "not very well."

[100b] "There is nothing new," he said, "in what I am about to tell you; but only what I have been always and everywhere repeating in the previous discussion and on other occasions: I want to show you the nature of that cause which has occupied my thoughts, and I shall have to go back to those familiar words which are in the mouth of everyone, and first of all assume that there is an absolute beauty and goodness and greatness, and the like; grant me this, and I hope to be able to show you the nature of the cause, and to prove **[100c]** the immortality of the *psūkhē*."

Cebes said, "You may proceed at once with the proof, as I readily grant you this."

"Well," he said, "then I should like to know whether you agree with me in the next step; for I cannot help thinking that if there be anything beautiful other than absolute beauty, that can only be beautiful in as far as it partakes of absolute beauty—and this I should say of everything. Do you agree in this notion of the cause?"

"Yes," he said, "I agree."

He proceeded: "I know nothing and can understand nothing of any other of those wise causes which are alleged; and if a person says to me that the bloom of color, **[100d]** or form, or anything else of that sort is a source of beauty, I leave all that, which is only confusing to me, and simply and singly, and perhaps foolishly, hold and am assured in my own mind that nothing makes a thing beautiful but the presence and participation of beauty in whatever way or manner obtained; for as to the manner I am uncertain, but I stoutly contend that by beauty all beautiful things become beautiful. That appears to me to be the only safe answer that I can give, either to myself or to any other, and to that I cling, **[100e]** in the persuasion that I shall never be overthrown, and that I may safely answer to myself or any other that by beauty beautiful things become beautiful. Do you not agree to that?"

"Yes, I agree."

"And that by greatness only great things become great and greater, and by smallness the less becomes less."

"True."

"Then if a person remarks that A is taller by a head than B, and B less by a head than A, **[101a]** you would refuse to admit this, and would stoutly contend that what you mean is only that the greater is greater by, and by reason of, greatness, and the less is less only by, or by reason of, smallness; and thus you would avoid the danger of saying that **[101b]** the greater is greater and the less by the measure of the head, which is the same in both, and would also avoid the monstrous absurdity of supposing

that the greater man is greater by reason of the head, which is small. Would you not be afraid of that?"

"Indeed, I should," said Cebes, laughing.

"In like manner would you be afraid to say that ten exceeded eight by, and by reason of, two, but would say by, and by reason of, number? Or that two cubits exceeded one cubit not by a half, but by magnitude? For there is the same danger in both cases."

"Very true," he said.

"Again, would you not be cautious of affirming that the addition of one to one, [101c] or the division of one, is the cause of two? And you would loudly asseverate that you know of no way in which anything comes into existence except by participation in its own proper essence, and consequently, as far as you know, the only cause of two is the participation in duality; that is the way to make two, and the participation in one is the way to make one. You would say: I will let alone puzzles of division and addition—wiser heads than mine may answer them; inexperienced as I am, and ready to start, [101d] as the proverb says, at my own shadow, I cannot afford to give up the sure ground of a principle. And if anyone assails you there, you would not mind him, or answer him until you had seen whether the consequences which follow agree with one another or not, and when you are further required to give an explanation of this principle, you would go on to assume a higher principle, and the best of the higher ones, [101e] until you found a resting-place; but you would not refuse the principle and the consequences in your reasoning like the Eristics—at least if you wanted to discover real existence. Not that this confusion signifies to them who never care or think about the matter at all, for they have the wit to be well pleased with themselves, however great may be the turmoil of their ideas. [102a] But you, if you are a philosopher, will, I believe, do as I say."

"What you say is most true," said Simmias and Cebes, both speaking at once.

Echecrates

Yes, Phaedo; and I don't wonder at their assenting. Anyone who has the least sense will acknowledge the wonderful clearness of Socrates' reasoning.

Phaedo

Certainly, Echecrates; and that was the feeling of the whole company at the time.

Echecrates

Yes, and equally of ourselves, who were not of the company, and are now listening to your recital. But what followed?

Phaedo

After all this was admitted, and they had agreed [102b] about the existence of ideas and the participation in them of the other things which derive their names from them, Socrates, if I remember rightly, said,

"This is your way of speaking; and yet when you say that Simmias is greater than Socrates and less than Phaedo, do you not predicate of Simmias both greatness and

smallness?”

“Yes, I do.”

“But still you allow that Simmias does not really exceed Socrates, as the words may seem to imply, because he is Simmias, **[102c]** but by reason of the size which he has; just as Simmias does not exceed Socrates because he is Simmias, any more than because Socrates is Socrates, but because he has smallness when compared with the greatness of Simmias?”

“True.”

“And if Phaedo exceeds him in size, that is not because Phaedo is Phaedo, but because Phaedo has greatness relatively to Simmias, who is comparatively smaller?”

“That is true.”

“And therefore Simmias is said to be great, and is also said to be small, because he is in a mean between them, **[102d]** exceeding the smallness of the one by his greatness, and allowing the greatness of the other to exceed his smallness.” Then he [= Socrates] smiled and said, “It seems just now that I am speaking as an author of some piece of writing [*sungraphikōs ereîn*]. Still, what I am saying does hold, I think.”

Simmias assented to this.

“The reason why I say this is that I want you to agree with me in thinking, not only that absolute greatness will never be great and also small, but that greatness in us or in the concrete will never admit the small or admit of being exceeded: instead of this, one of two things will happen—either the greater will fly or retire **[102e]** before the opposite, which is the less, or at the advance of the less will cease to exist; but will not, if allowing or admitting smallness, be changed by that; even as I, having received and admitted smallness when compared with Simmias, remain just as I was, and am the same small person. And as the idea of greatness cannot condescend ever to be or become small, in like manner the smallness in us cannot be or become great; nor can any other opposite which remains the same ever be or become its own opposite, **[103a]** but either passes away or perishes in the change.”

“That,” replied Cebes, “is quite my notion.”

One of the company, though I do not exactly remember which of them, on hearing this, said, “I swear by the gods, is not this the direct contrary of what was admitted before—that out of the greater came the less and out of the less the greater, and that opposites are simply generated from opposites; whereas now this seems to be utterly denied.”

Socrates inclined his head to the speaker and listened. **[103b]** “I like your courage,” he said, “in reminding us of this. But you do not observe that there is a difference in the two cases. For then we were speaking of opposites in the concrete, and now of the essential opposite which, as is affirmed, neither in us nor in nature can ever be at variance with itself: then, my friend, we were speaking of things in which opposites

are inherent and which are called after them, but now about the opposites which are inherent in them and which give their name to them; these essential opposites will never, as we maintain, **[103c]** admit of generation into or out of one another."

At the same time, turning to Cebes, he said, "Were you at all disconcerted, Cebes, at our friend's objection?"

"That was not my feeling," said Cebes; "and yet I cannot deny that I am apt to be disconcerted."

"Then we are agreed after all," said Socrates, "that the opposite will never in any case be opposed to itself?"

"To that we are quite agreed," he replied.

"Yet once more let me ask you to consider the question from another point of view, and see whether you agree with me: There is a thing which you term heat, and another thing which you term cold?"

"Certainly."

But are they the same as fire and snow?"

[103d] "Most assuredly not."

"Heat is not the same as fire, nor is cold the same as snow?"

"No."

"And yet you will surely admit that when snow, as before said, is under the influence of heat, they will not remain snow and heat; but at the advance of the heat the snow will either retire or perish?"

"Very true," he replied.

"And the fire too at the advance of the cold will either retire or perish; and when the fire is under the influence of the cold, **[103e]** they will not remain, as before, fire and cold."

"That is true," he said.

"And in some cases the name of the idea is not confined to the idea; but anything else which, not being the idea, exists only in the form of the idea, may also lay claim to it. I will try to make this clearer by an example: the odd number is always called by the name of odd?"

"Very true."

"But is this the only thing which is called odd? Are there not other things which have their own name, **[104a]** and yet are called odd, because, although not the same as

oddness, they are never without oddness?—that is what I mean to ask—whether numbers such as the number three are not of the class of odd. And there are many other examples: would you not say, for example, that three may be called by its proper name, and also be called odd, which is not the same with three? and this may be said not only of three but also of five, and every alternate number—each of them without being oddness is odd, **[104b]** and in the same way two and four, and the whole series of alternate numbers, has every number even, without being evenness. Do you admit that?”

“Yes,” he said, “how can I deny that?”

“Then now mark the point at which I am aiming: not only do essential opposites exclude one another, but also concrete things, which, although not in themselves opposed, contain opposites; these, I say, also reject the idea which is opposed to that which is contained in them, **[104c]** and at the advance of that they either perish or withdraw. There is the number three for example; will not that endure annihilation or anything sooner than be converted into an even number, remaining three?”

“Very true,” said Cebes.

“And yet,” he said, “the number two is certainly not opposed to the number three?”

“It is not.”

“Then not only do opposite ideas repel the advance of one another, but also there are other things which repel the approach of opposites.”

“That is quite true,” he said.

“Suppose,” he said, “that we endeavor, if possible, to determine what these are.”

“By all means.”

[104d] “Are they not, Cebes, such as compel the things of which they have possession, not only to take their own form, but also the form of some opposite?”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean, as I was just now saying, and have no need to repeat to you, that those things which are possessed by the number three must not only be three in number, but must also be odd.”

“Quite true. And on this oddness, of which the number three has the impress, the opposite idea will never intrude?”

“No.”

“And this impress was given by the odd principle?”

“Yes.”

"And to the odd is opposed the even?"

[104e] "True."

"Then the idea of the even number will never arrive at three?"

"No."

"Then three has no part in the even?"

"None."

"Then the triad or number three is uneven?"

"Very true."

"To return then to my distinction of natures which are not opposites, and yet do not admit opposites: as, in this instance, three, although not opposed to the even, does not any the more admit of the even, but always brings the opposite into play on the other side; **[105a]** or as two does not receive the odd, or fire the cold—from these examples (and there are many more of them) perhaps you may be able to arrive at the general conclusion that not only opposites will not receive opposites, but also that nothing which brings the opposite will admit the opposite of that which it brings in that to which it is brought. And here let me recapitulate—for there is no harm in repetition. The number five will not admit the nature of the even, any more than ten, which is the double of five, will admit the nature of the odd—the double, though not strictly opposed to the odd, rejects the odd altogether. **[105b]** Nor again will parts in the ratio of 3:2, nor any fraction in which there is a half, nor again in which there is a third, admit the notion of the whole, although they are not opposed to the whole. You will agree to that?"

"Yes," he said, "I entirely agree and go along with you in that."

"And now," he [= Socrates] said, "I think that I may begin again; and to the question which I am about to ask I will beg you to give not the old safe answer, but another, of which I will offer you an example; and I hope that you will find in what has been just said another foundation which is as safe. I mean that if anyone asks you 'what that is, the inherence of which makes the body hot,' you will reply not heat **[105c]** (this is what I call the safe and stupid answer), but fire, a far better answer, which we are now in a condition to give. Or if anyone asks you 'why a body is diseased,' you will not say from disease, but from fever; and instead of saying that oddness is the cause of odd numbers, you will say that the monad is the cause of them: and so of things in general, as I dare say that you will understand sufficiently without my adducing any further examples."

"Yes," he said, "I quite understand you."

"Tell me, then, what is that the inherence of which will render the body alive?"

"The *psūkhē*," he replied."

[105d] "And is this always the case?"

"Yes," he said, "of course."

"Then whatever the *psūkhē* possesses, to that it comes bearing life?"

"Yes, certainly."

"And is there any opposite to life?"

"There is," he said.

"And what is that?"

"Death."

"Then the *psūkhē*, as has been acknowledged, will never receive the opposite of what it brings."

"Absolutely," said Cebes.

"And now," he [= Socrates] said, "what did we call that principle which repels the even?"

"The odd."

"And that principle which repels the musical, or the just?"

[105e] "The unmusical," he said, "and the unjust."

"And what do we call the principle which does not admit of death?"

"The immortal," he said.

"And does the *psūkhē* admit of death?"

"No."

"Then the *psūkhē* is immortal?"

"Yes," he said.

"And may we say that this is proven?"

"Yes, abundantly proven, Socrates", he replied.

"And supposing that the odd were imperishable, **[106a]** must not three be imperishable?"

"Of course."

“And if that which is cold were imperishable, when the warm principle came attacking the snow, must not the snow have retreated and stayed safe and sound [= adjective from *sōzein*] and unmelted—for it could never have perished, nor could it have remained and admitted the heat?”

“True,” he said.

“Again, if the uncooling or warm principle were imperishable, the fire when assailed by cold would not have perished or have been extinguished, but would have gone away unaffected?”

“Certainly,” he said.

[106b] “And the same may be said of the immortal: if the immortal is also imperishable, the *psūkhē* when attacked by death cannot perish; for the preceding argument shows that the *psūkhē* will not admit of death, or ever be dead, any more than three or the odd number will admit of the even, or fire or the heat in the fire, of the cold. Yet a person may say: ‘But although the odd will not become even at the approach of the even, why may not the odd perish **[106c]** and the even take the place of the odd?’ Now to him who makes this objection, we cannot answer that the odd principle is imperishable; for this has not been acknowledged, but if this had been acknowledged, there would have been no difficulty in contending that at the approach of the even the odd principle and the number three took up their departure; and the same argument would have held good of fire and heat and any other thing.”

“Very true.”

“And the same may be said of the immortal: if the immortal is also imperishable, then the *psūkhē* will be imperishable as well as immortal; **[106d]** but if not, some other proof of its imperishability will have to be given.”

“No other proof is needed,” he said, “for if the immortal, being eternal, is liable to perish, then nothing is imperishable.”

“Yes,” replied Socrates, “all men will agree that the god, and the essential form of life, and the immortal in general, will never perish.”

“Yes, all men,” he said—“that is true; and what is more, gods, if I am not mistaken, as well as men.”

“Seeing then that the immortal is indestructible, **[106e]** must not the *psūkhē*, if it is immortal, be also imperishable?”

“Most certainly.”

“Then when death attacks a man, the mortal portion of him may be supposed to die, but the immortal goes out of the way of death and is preserved safe and sound?”

“True.”

"Then, Cebes, **[107a]** beyond question the *psūkhē* is immortal and imperishable, and our *psūkhai* will truly exist in another world!"

"I am convinced, Socrates," said Cebes, "and have nothing more to object; but if my friend Simmias, or anyone else, has any further objection, he had better speak out, and not keep silence, since I do not know how there can ever be a more fitting time to which he can defer the discussion, if there is anything which he wants to say or have said."

"But I have nothing more to say," replied Simmias; "nor do I see any room for uncertainty, except that which arises necessarily out of the greatness of the subject **[107b]** and the feebleness of man, and which I cannot help feeling."

"Yes, Simmias," replied Socrates, "that is well said: and more than that, first principles, even if they appear certain, should be carefully considered; and when they are satisfactorily ascertained, then, with a sort of hesitating confidence in human reason, you may, I think, follow the course of the argument; and if this is clear, there will be no need for any further inquiry."

"That," he said, "is true."

"But then, O my friends," he said, **[107c]** "if the *psūkhē* is really immortal, what care should be taken of it, not only in respect of the portion of time which is called life, but of eternity! And the danger of neglecting it from this point of view does indeed appear to be awful. If death had only been the end of all, the wicked would have had a good bargain in dying, for they would have been happily quit not only of their body, but of their own evil together with their *psūkhai*. But now, as the *psūkhē* plainly appears to be immortal, there is **[107d]** no release or salvation [*sōtēriā*] from evil except the attainment of the highest virtue and wisdom. For the *psūkhē* when on its progress to the world below takes nothing with it but nurture and education; which are indeed said greatly to benefit or greatly to injure the departed, at the very beginning of its pilgrimage in the other world.

"For after death, as they say, the *daimōn* that is within each individual, to whom he [= the *daimōn*] belonged in life, leads him to a certain place in which the dead are gathered together for judgment, whence they go into the world below, **[107e]** following the guide who is appointed to conduct them from this world to the other: and when they have there received their due and remained their time, another guide brings them back again after many revolutions of ages. Now this journey to the other world is not, as Aeschylus says in the *Telephus*, **[108a]** a single and straight path—no guide would be wanted for that, and no one could miss a single path; but there are many partings of the road, and windings, as I must infer from the rites and sacrifices which are offered to the gods below in places where three ways meet on earth. The wise and orderly *psūkhē* is conscious of its situation and follows in the path; but the *psūkhē* which desires the body, and which, as I was relating before, has long been fluttering about the lifeless frame and the world of sight, **[108b]** is after many struggles and many sufferings hardly and with violence carried away by its attendant *daimōn*, and when it arrives at the place where the other *psūkhai* are gathered, if it be impure and have done impure deeds, or been concerned in foul murders or other crimes which are the brothers of these, and the works of brothers in crime—from that

psūkhē everyone flees and turns away; no one will be its companion, no one its guide, **[108c]** but alone it wanders in extremity of evil until certain times are fulfilled, and when they are fulfilled, it is borne irresistibly to its own fitting habitation; as every pure and just *psūkhē* which has passed through life in the company and under the guidance of the gods has also its own proper home.

“Now the earth has divers wonderful regions, and is indeed in nature and extent very unlike the notions of geographers, as I believe on the authority of one who shall be nameless.”

[108d] “What do you mean, Socrates?” said Simmias. “I have myself heard many descriptions of the earth, but I do not know in what you are putting your faith, and I should like to know.”

“Well, Simmias,” replied Socrates, “the recital of a tale does not, I think, require the art of Glaukos; and I know not that the art of Glaukos could prove the truth of my tale, which I myself should never be able to prove, and even if I could, I fear, Simmias, that my life would come to an end before the argument was completed. I may describe to you, however, **[108e]** the form and regions of the earth according to my conception of them.”

“That,” said Simmias, “will be enough.”

“Well, then,” he said, “my conviction is that the earth is a round body in the center of the sky, and therefore has no need of air **[109a]** or any similar force as a support, but is kept there and hindered from falling or inclining any way by the equability of the surrounding sky and by its own equipoise. For that which, being in equipoise, is in the center of that which is equably diffused, will not incline any way in any degree, but will always remain in the same state and not deviate. And this is my first notion.”

“Which is surely a correct one,” said Simmias.

“Also I believe that the earth is very vast, and that we who dwell in the region extending from the river Phasis to the Pillars of Hēraklēs, **[109b]** along the borders of the sea, are just like ants or frogs about a marsh, and inhabit a small portion only, and that many others dwell in many like places. For I should say that in all parts of the earth there are hollows of various forms and sizes, into which the water and the mist and the air collect; and that the true earth is pure and in the pure sky, in which also are the stars— **[109c]** that is the sky which is commonly spoken of as the ether, of which this is but the sediment collecting in the hollows of the earth. But we who live in these hollows are deceived into the notion that we are dwelling above on the surface of the earth; which is just as if a creature who was at the bottom of the sea were to fancy that he was on the surface of the water, and that the sea was the sky through which he saw the sun and the other stars – he having never come to the surface by reason of his feebleness and sluggishness, **[109d]** and having never lifted up his head and seen, nor ever heard from one who had seen, this region which is so much purer and fairer than his own. Now this is exactly our case: for we are dwelling in a hollow of the earth, and fancy that we are on the surface; and the air we call the sky, and in this we imagine that the stars move. **[109e]** But this is also owing to our feebleness and sluggishness, which prevent our reaching the surface of the air: for if

any man could arrive at the exterior limit, or take the wings of a bird and fly upward, like a fish who puts his head out and sees this world, he would see a world beyond; and, if the nature of man could sustain the sight, he would acknowledge that this was the place of the true sky **[110a]** and the true light and the true stars. For this earth, and the stones, and the entire region which surrounds us, are spoilt and corroded, like the things in the sea which are corroded by the brine; for in the sea too there is hardly any noble or perfect growth, but clefts only, and sand, and an endless slough of mud: and even the shore is not to be compared to the fairer sights of this world. And greater far is the superiority of the other. **[110b]** Now of that upper earth which is under the sky, I can tell you a charming tale [*mūthos*], Simmias, which is well worth hearing."

"And we, Socrates," replied Simmias, "shall be charmed to listen to the tale [*mūthos*]."

"The tale, my friend," he said, "is as follows: In the first place, the earth, when looked at from above, is like one of those balls which have leather coverings in twelve pieces, and is of divers colors, of which the colors which painters use on earth are only a sample. **[110c]** But there the whole earth is made up of them, and they are brighter far and clearer than ours; there is a purple of wonderful luster, also the radiance of gold, and the white which is in the earth is whiter than any chalk or snow. Of these and other colors the earth is made up, and they are more in number and fairer than the eye of man has ever seen; and the very hollows (of which I was speaking) filled with air and water **[110d]** are seen like light flashing amid the other colors, and have a color of their own, which gives a sort of unity to the variety of earth. And in this fair region everything that grows—trees, and flowers, and fruits—is in a like degree fairer than any here; and there are hills, and stones in them in a like degree smoother, and more transparent, and fairer in color than our highly valued emeralds and sardonyx and **[110e]** jaspers, and other gems, which are but minute fragments of them: for there all the stones are like our precious stones, and fairer still. The reason of this is that they are pure, and not, like our precious stones, infected or corroded by the corrupt briny elements which coagulate among us, and which breed foulness and disease both in earth and stones, as well as in animals and plants. They are the jewels of the upper earth, which also shines with gold and **[111a]** silver and the like, and they are visible to sight and large and abundant and found in every region of the earth, and blessed is he who sees them. And upon the earth are animals and men, some in a middle region, others dwelling about the air as we dwell about the sea; others in islands which the air flows round, near the continent: and in a word, **[111b]** the air is used by them as the water and the sea are by us, and the ether is to them what the air is to us. Moreover, the temperament of their seasons [*hōrai*] is such that they have no disease, and live much longer than we do, and have sight and hearing and smell, and all the other senses, in far greater perfection, in the same degree that air is purer than water or the ether than air. Also they have temples and sacred places in which the gods really dwell, and they hear their voices and receive their oracular responses [*manteia*], and are conscious of them and hold converse with them, **[111c]** and they see the sun, moon, and stars as they really are, and their other blessedness is of a piece with this.

"Such is the nature of the whole earth, and of the things which are around the earth; and there are divers regions in the hollows on the face of the globe everywhere, some

of them deeper and also wider than that which we inhabit, **[111d]** others deeper and with a narrower opening than ours, and some are shallower and wider; all have numerous perforations, and passages broad and narrow in the interior of the earth, connecting them with one another; and there flows into and out of them, as into basins, a vast tide of water, and huge subterranean streams of perennial rivers, and springs hot and cold, and a great fire, and great rivers of fire, and streams of liquid mud, **[111e]** thin or thick (like the rivers of mud in Sicily, and the lava-streams which follow them), and the regions about which they happen to flow are filled up with them. And there is a sort of swing in the interior of the earth which moves all this up and down. Now the swing is in this wise: There is a chasm which is the vastest of them all, **[112a]** and pierces right through the whole earth; this is that which Homer describes in the words, 'Far off, where is the inmost depth beneath the earth'; and which he in other places, and many other poets, have called Tartaros. And the swing is caused by the streams flowing into and out of this chasm, and they each have the nature of the soil through which they flow. And the reason why the streams are always flowing in and out **[112b]** is that the watery element has no bed or bottom, and is surging and swinging up and down, and the surrounding wind and air do the same; they follow the water up and down, hither and thither, over the earth—just as in respiring the air is always in process of inhalation and exhalation; and the wind swinging with the water in and out produces fearful and irresistible blasts: **[112c]** when the waters retire with a rush into the lower parts of the earth, as they are called, they flow through the earth into those regions, and fill them up as with the alternate motion of a pump, and then when they leave those regions and rush back hither, they again fill the hollows here, and when these are filled, flow through subterranean channels and find their way to their several places, forming seas, and lakes, and rivers, and springs. Thence they again enter the earth, **[112d]** some of them making a long circuit into many lands, others going to few places and those not distant, and again fall into Tartaros, some at a point a good deal lower than that at which they rose, and others not much lower, but all in some degree lower than the point of issue. And some burst forth again on the opposite side, and some on the same side, and some wind round the earth with one or many folds, like the coils of a serpent, and descend as far as they can, but always return and fall into the lake. **[112e]** The rivers on either side can descend only to the center and no further, for to the rivers on both sides the opposite side is a precipice.

"Now these rivers are many, and mighty, and diverse, and there are four principal ones, of which the greatest and outermost is that called Okeanos, which flows round the earth in a circle; and in the opposite direction flows Acheron, which passes **[113a]** under the earth through desert places, into the Acherusian Lake: this is the lake to the shores of which the *psūkhai* of the many go when they are dead, and after waiting an appointed time, which is to some a longer and to some a shorter time, they are sent back again to be born as animals. The third river rises between the two, and near the place of rising pours into a vast region of fire, and forms a lake larger than the Mediterranean Sea, boiling with water and mud; **[113b]** and proceeding muddy and turbid, and winding about the earth, comes, among other places, to the extremities of the Acherusian Lake, but mingles not with the waters of the lake, and after making many coils about the earth plunges into Tartaros at a deeper level. This is that Pyriphlegethon, as the stream is called, which throws up jets of fire in all sorts of places. The fourth river goes out on the opposite side, and falls first of all into a wild and savage region, which is all of a dark-blue color, like lapis lazuli; **[113c]** and this is

that river which is called the Stygian River, and falls into and forms the Lake Styx, and after falling into the lake and receiving strange powers in the waters, passes under the earth, winding round in the opposite direction to Pyriphlegethon, and meeting in the Acherusian Lake from the opposite side. And the water of this river too mingles with no other, but flows round in a circle and falls into Tartaros over against Pyriphlegethon, and the name of this river, as the poet says, is Cocytus.

[113d] “Such is the name of the other world; and when the dead arrive at the place to which the [*daimōn*] of each severally conveys them, first of all they have sentence passed upon them, as they have lived well and piously or not. And those who appear to have lived neither well nor ill, go to the river Acheron, and mount such conveyances as they can get, and are carried in them to the lake, and there they dwell and are purified of their evil deeds, and suffer the penalty of the wrongs which they have done to others, and are absolved, **[113e]** and receive the rewards of their good deeds according to their deserts. But those who appear to be incurable by reason of the greatness of their crimes – who have committed many and terrible deeds of sacrilege, murders foul and violent, or the like – such are hurled into Tartaros, which is their suitable destiny, and they never come out. Those again who have committed crimes, which, although great, are not unpardonable—who in a moment of anger, for example, have done violence to a father or mother, **[114a]** and have repented for the remainder of their lives, or who have taken the life of another under like extenuating circumstances—these are plunged into Tartaros, the pains of which they are compelled to undergo for a year, but at the end of the year the wave casts them forth—mere homicides by way of Cocytus, parricides and matricides by Pyriphlegethon—and they are borne to the Lake of Acheron, and there they lift up their voices and call upon the victims whom they have slain or wronged, **[114b]** to have pity on them, and to receive them, and to let them come out of the river into the lake. And if they prevail, then they come forth and cease from their troubles; but if not, they are carried back again into Tartaros and from thence into the rivers unceasingly, until they obtain mercy from those whom they have wronged: for that is the sentence inflicted upon them by their judges. Those also who are remarkable for having led holy lives are released from this earthly prison, **[114c]** and go to their pure home which is above, and dwell in the purer earth; and those who have duly purified themselves with philosophy live henceforth altogether without the body, in mansions fairer far than these, which may not be described, and of which the time would fail me to tell.

“Wherefore, Simmias, seeing all these things, what ought not we to do in order to obtain virtue and wisdom in this life? Fair is the prize [*āthlon*], and the hope great.

[114d] “I do not mean to affirm that the description which I have given of the *psūkhē* and its mansions is exactly true—a man of sense ought hardly to say that. But I do say that, inasmuch as the *psūkhē* is shown to be immortal, he may venture to think, not improperly or unworthily, that something of the kind is true. The venture is a glorious one, and he ought to comfort himself with words like these, which is the reason I am lengthening out the tale [*mūthos*]. Wherefore, I say, let a man be of good cheer about his *psūkhē*, **[114e]** who has cast away the pleasures and ornaments of the body as alien to him, and rather hurtful in their effects, and has followed after the pleasures of knowledge in this life; who has adorned the *psūkhē* in its own proper jewels, which are temperance, and justice, and **[115a]** courage, and nobility, and truth—in these arrayed it is ready to go on its journey to the world below, when its

time comes. You, Simmias and Cebes, and all other men, will depart at some time or other. Me already, as the tragic poet would say, the voice of fate calls. Soon I must drink the poison; and I think that it is time [*hōrā*] that I repair to the bath, in order that the women may not have the trouble of washing my body after I am dead."

When he had done speaking, Crito said, **[115b]** "And have you any commands for us, Socrates—anything to say about your children, or any other matter in which we can serve you?"

"Nothing particular," he said, "only, as I have always told you, I would have you look to yourselves; that is a service which you may always be doing to me and mine as well as to yourselves. And you need not make professions; for if you take no thought for yourselves, and walk not according to the precepts which I have given you, **[115c]** not now for the first time, the warmth of your professions will be of no avail."

"We will do our best," said Crito. "But in what way would you have us bury you?"

"In any way that you like; only you must get hold of me, and take care that I do not walk away from you." Then he turned to us, and added with a smile: "I cannot make Crito believe that I am the same Socrates who have been talking and conducting the argument; he fancies that I am the other Socrates whom he will soon see, a dead body— **[115d]** and he asks, how shall he bury me? And though I have spoken many words in the endeavor to show that when I have drunk the poison I shall leave you and go to the joys of the blessed—these words of mine, with which I comforted [*paramutheîsthai* = divert by way of *mūthos*] you and myself, have had, I perceive, no effect upon Crito. And therefore I want you to be surety for me now, as he was surety for me at the trial: but let the promise be of another sort; for he was my surety to the judges that I would remain, but you must be my surety to him that I shall not remain, but go away and depart; **[115e]** and then he will suffer less at my death, and not be grieved when he sees my body being burned or buried. I would not have him sorrow at my hard lot, or say at the burial, Thus we lay out Socrates, or, Thus we follow him to the grave or bury him; for false words are not only evil in themselves, but they infect the *psūkhē* with evil. Be of good cheer, then, my dear Crito, and say that you are burying my body only, **[116a]** and do with that as is usual, and as you think best."

When he had spoken these words, he arose and went into the bath chamber with Crito, who bade us wait; and we waited, talking and thinking of the subject of discourse, and also of the greatness of our sorrow; he was like a father of whom we were being bereaved, and we were about to pass the rest of our lives as orphans. When he had taken the bath **[116b]** his children were brought to him—he had two young sons and an elder one); and the women of his family also came, and he talked to them and gave them a few directions in the presence of Crito; and he then dismissed them and returned to us.

Now the hour of sunset was near, for a good deal of time had passed while he was within. When he came out, he sat down with us again after his bath, but not much was said. Soon the jailer, who was the servant of the Eleven, **[116c]** entered and stood by him, saying: "To you, Socrates, whom I know to be the noblest and gentlest and best of all who ever came to this place, I will not impute the angry feelings of

other men, who rage and swear at me when, in obedience to the authorities, I bid them drink the poison—indeed, I am sure that you will not be angry with me; for others, as you are aware, and not I, are the guilty cause. And so fare you well, and try to bear lightly what must needs be; you know my errand." **[116d]** Then bursting into tears he turned away and went out.

Socrates looked at him and said, "I return your good wishes, and will do as you bid." Then, turning to us, he said, "How charming the man is: since I have been in prison he has always been coming to see me, and at times he would talk to me, and was as good as could be to me, and now see how generously he sorrows for me. But we must do as he says, Crito; let the cup be brought, if the poison is prepared: if not, let the attendant prepare some."

[116e] "Yet," said Crito, "the sun is still upon the hilltops, and many a one has taken the draught late, and after the announcement has been made to him, he has eaten and drunk, and indulged in sensual delights; do not hasten then, there is still time."

Socrates said, "Yes, Crito, and they of whom you speak are right in doing thus, for they think that they will gain by the delay; but I am right in not doing thus, **[117a]** for I do not think that I should gain anything by drinking the poison a little later; I should be sparing and saving a life which is already gone: I could only laugh at myself for this. Go, and do as I say."

Crito, when he heard this, signaled with a nod to the boy servant who was standing nearby, and the servant went in, remaining for some time, and then came out with the man who was going to administer the poison [*pharmakon*]. He was carrying a cup that contained it, ground into the drink. When Socrates saw the man he said: "You, my good man, since you are experienced in these matters, should tell me what needs to be done." The man answered: "You need to drink it, that's all. Then walk around until you feel a heaviness **[117b]** in your legs. Then lie down. This way, the poison will do its thing." While the man was saying this, he handed the cup to Socrates. And Socrates took it in a cheerful way, not flinching or getting pale or grimacing. Then looking at the man from beneath his brows, like a bull—that was the way he used to look at people—he said: "What do you say about my pouring a libation out of this cup to someone? Is it allowed or not?" The man answered: "What we grind is measured out, Socrates, as the right dose for drinking."

"I understand," he said. **[117c]** "but surely it is allowed and even proper to pray to the gods so that my transfer of dwelling [*met-oikēsis*] from this world [*enthende*] to that world [*ekeise*] should be fortunate. So, that is what I too am now praying for. Let it be this way." And, while he was saying this, he took the cup to his lips and, quite readily and cheerfully, he drank down the whole dose. Up to this point, most of us had been able to control fairly well our urge to let our tears flow; but now when we saw him drinking the poison, and then saw him finish the drink, we could no longer hold back, and, in my case, quite against my own will, my own tears were now pouring out in a flood. So, I covered my face and had a good cry. You see, I was not crying for him, **[117d]** but at the thought of my own bad fortune in having lost such a comrade [*hetairos*]. Crito, even before me, found himself unable to hold back his tears: so he got up and moved away. And Apollodorus, who had been weeping all along, now started to cry in a loud voice, expressing his frustration. So, he made everyone else

break down and cry—except for Socrates himself. And he said: “What are you all doing? I am so surprised at you. I had sent away the women mainly because I did not want them **[117e]** to lose control in this way. You see, I have heard that a man should come to his end [*teleutân*] in a way that calls for measured speaking [*euphēmeîn*]. So, you must have composure [*hēsukhiā*], and you must endure.”

When we heard that, we were ashamed, and held back our tears. He meanwhile was walking around until, as he said, his legs began to get heavy, and then he lay on his back—that is what the man had told him to do. Then that same man who had given him the poison [*pharmakon*] took hold of him, now and then checking on his feet and legs; and after a while he pressed his foot hard and asked him if he could feel it; and he said that he couldn’t; and then he pressed his shins, **[118a]** and so on, moving further up, thus demonstrating for us that he was cold and stiff. Then he [= Socrates] took hold of his own feet and legs, saying that when the poison reaches his heart, then he will be gone. He was beginning to get cold around the abdomen. Then he uncovered his face, for he had covered himself up, and said—this was the last thing he uttered— “Crito, I owe the sacrifice of a rooster to Asklepios; will you pay that debt and not neglect to do so?”

“I will make it so,” said Crito, “and, tell me, is there anything else?” When Crito asked this question, no answer came back anymore from Socrates. In a short while, he stirred. Then the man uncovered his face. His eyes were set in a dead stare. Seeing this, Crito closed his mouth and his eyes.

Such was the end [*teleutē*], Echecrates, of our comrade [*hetairos*]. And we may say about him that he was in his time the best [*aristos*] of all men we ever encountered—and the most intelligent [*phronimos*] and most just [*dikaios*].

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