

WRITINGS FROM THE GRECO-ROMAN WORLD



Iamblichus  
*On the Mysteries*

Translated with Introduction and Notes by  
Emma C. Clarke, John M. Dillon, and Jackson P. Hershbell

Iamblichus: *De mysteriis*



Society of Biblical Literature



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Society of Biblical Literature  
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IAMBLICHUS: DE MYSTERIIS

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# Preface and Acknowledgments

Eunapius remarked that Iamblichus's writings were neither eloquent nor graceful— or, “as Plato used to say of Xenocrates, he has not sacrificed to the Hermaic graces” (*Vit. soph.* 458). This, although only in part, may help to explain why our English translation of the *De mysteriis* has been so long in the making! Hans Dieter Betz first approached John Dillon and Jackson Hershbell some years ago, suggesting a follow-up to their collaboration on the translation of the *De vita pythagorica*. John worked on his translation during a year spent in Paris in 1996, while Jack attempted to plough through the seemingly interminable Books II and III in Minnesota. Due to extenuating circumstances, including illness and a heavy workload, the project was temporarily shelved.

John and I met in 1998 and I joined the team for a second wind in 1999. The three of us met in Dublin in November of that year, and John and I again in May 2000. The collaboration has been both stimulating and, at last, greatly productive, and we feel that this edition offers a substantial contribution to the accessibility of this strange and often turgid text. We have not attempted a full textual commentary, which, in any case, would be inappropriate in that we do not offer a substantially new version of the text; we have, however, provided extensive notes which aim to place Iamblichus firmly where he belongs—in the world of Platonism, and as a commentator on Egyptian and Assyrian magic.

We owe a huge debt to Johan Thom, who has studied our work in enormous detail and furnished us with a huge number of valuable corrections and improvements. My own special thanks are owed to Jack and to John, from whose collaboration I have learned so much, and to John Fitzgerald who has been unfailingly supportive and has helped me with the editing far more than he should. Juggling an edition of the *De mysteriis* with full-time school-teaching has been an experience to say the least, and it is his support that has helped to make this possible.

Emma C. Clarke  
June 2002





# Abbreviations

<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
<i>ByzZ</i>	<i>Byzantinische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>ChrEg</i>	<i>Chronique d'Égypte</i>
<i>CQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
<i>EPRO</i>	Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain
<i>GRBS</i>	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>JEA</i>	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>OCD</i>	<i>Oxford Classical Dictionary</i>
<i>PWSup</i>	Supplement to A. F. Pauly and G. Wissowa (eds.), <i>Pauly's Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i>
<i>REAug</i>	<i>Revue des études augustinienes</i>
<i>REG</i>	<i>Revue des études grecques</i>
<i>SBLRBS</i>	Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study
<i>SBLTT</i>	Society of Biblical Literature Texts and Translations
<i>TUGAL</i>	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur
<i>ZPE</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>



# Introduction

## I. ON THE TEXT AND TRANSLATION OF THE *DE MYSTERIIS*

Given Martin Sicherl's thorough study of the *De mysteriis*, brief observations here will suffice. According to Sicherl, the famous scholar Joseph Bidez, prior to his death in 1945, announced an essay on the manuscript tradition of the *De mysteriis*, which has never been published and which now seems to be lost.<sup>1</sup> It was Bidez who encouraged Sicherl to undertake his own study of the manuscripts, editions and translations of Iamblichus's *De mysteriis*, indispensable for any translator. After extensive travels between 1938 and 1956, Sicherl was able to inspect almost all the manuscripts,<sup>2</sup> and divided the collection into two classes. Among the first are those with Greek lemmata from the Byzantine period, omitted in some copies. The "hyparchetype"<sup>3</sup> of all codices is Vallicellianus F20 (= V), c. 1460, studied by Marsilio Ficino for his own Latin translation (or paraphrase) of the *De mysteriis* (1497).<sup>4</sup> In the second class of complete manuscripts are those going back, directly or indirectly, to a single codex, Marcianus graecus 244 (= M). This is the second "hyparchetype," c. 1458.<sup>5</sup> Like Bidez before him, Sicherl used the sigla V and M, but for Bidez, M was Monacensis graecus 361b, which he mistakenly took for Marcianus graecus 244.<sup>6</sup> Sicherl himself used M for Marcianus graecus 244 and G for Monacensis graecus 361b, while

<sup>1</sup> See Sicherl's (1957) foreword.

<sup>2</sup> Sicherl (1957, xi) notes that he was able to learn "aus Autopsie" all manuscripts "mit Ausnahme der spanischen und englischen."

<sup>3</sup> On the concept of the "hyparchetype" see Sicherl (1957, 160); for the sake of simplicity, Sicherl understood *a potiori* an exemplar, which came from the East to Italy, and from which all extant manuscripts, with the exception of h, are derived.

<sup>4</sup> On Ficino's paraphrase see Sicherl (1957, 182–88). Ficino's work was translated into Italian by Giovanni di Niccolò da Falgano. On V see Sicherl (1957, 22–37).

<sup>5</sup> On M see Sicherl (1957, 90–97).

<sup>6</sup> Sicherl (1957, 3).

refusing to bring his sigla into conformity with those of Sodano, who used A for the first “hyparchetype” (Vall. F20) and B–O for derivative manuscripts; P was, for Sodano, the “hyparchetype” of the second class of manuscripts (Marc. gr. 244) and Q–X were its derivatives.<sup>7</sup> Despite their use of different sigla, Sicherl and Sodano agreed that only two “hyparchetypes,” V and M, could be the basis for any future editions of the text.<sup>8</sup>

In our own translation we have used the Budé text of Édouard Des Places, who relied upon V and M, and also collated fragment L (Vat. Gr. 1026), which has a part from the thirteenth century. For emendations, Des Places relied not only on those of Ficino (V<sup>2</sup>) and Bessarion (M<sup>2</sup>), but also on those of copyists such as Callierges, Nuncius and Vergèce. Des Places also consulted the editions of Scutellius, Holste, Bouillau, Gale, Vossius and Meibom, sometimes noted in the apparatus. He examined all manuscripts directly, and since his text remains faithful to V and M, we have accepted many, though not all, of his readings.

Des Places’s consultation of Thomas Gale’s edition deserves, however, special mention. In 1678 Gale published the *editio princeps* of the *De mysteriis*, with fragments of Porphyry’s *Epistle to Anebo*, Eunapius’s *Life of Iamblichus*, and a biographical entry from the *Suda*, a Byzantine lexicon.<sup>9</sup> Gale had received an exemplar of the *De mysteriis* from his teacher, Isaac Vossius, and used this as the basis for his edition. This exemplar is now known as Leidensis Vossianus graecus Q22.<sup>10</sup> A number of variants given in Gale’s notes, however, are from codices regii (Paris), given to him by E. Bernard, Professor of Astronomy in Oxford, and by the French scholar J. Mabillon. Gale, who was once Professor of Greek in Cambridge (1666), and later Dean of York Cathedral (1677), had originally planned an edition of all of Iamblichus’s works; only the *De mysteriis* appeared, and Gale recognised its weaknesses, including the drastic omission of words and phrases as a result of printing errors. Moreover, Gale’s Latin translation

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Des Places’s (1996, 31) brief description of Sodano’s sigla. He believes that Sicherl’s system has advantages over that of Sodano.

<sup>8</sup> See Sicherl (1957, 200) and Sodano (1952).

<sup>9</sup> On Gale and his edition see Sicherl (1957, 195–98).

<sup>10</sup> On Vossius and the codex (Leid. Voss. Q 22 [=B]), see Sicherl (1957, 107–11).

contains many of his conjectures, and does not always follow the Greek text.

A much later edition of the *De mysteriis* by Gustav Parthey (1857), who was interested in “mystical” works and produced, for example, editions of Plutarch’s *De Iside et Osiride* (1850), the *Poimandres* (1854), and the Greek magical papyri (1866), is considered deficient by Sicherl.<sup>11</sup> Parthey knew of neither V nor M, and erred in giving great attention to the worthless codex A (= Laurentinus 10,32). Parthey also relied heavily on Gale’s edition, and showed little knowledge of textual criticism. It is perhaps unfortunate that a text with so many weaknesses remains the standard basis for referencing the *De mysteriis*, but given the growing wealth of recent secondary literature on the *De mysteriis* that follows Des Places’s decision to maintain Parthey’s page numbers, it is essential that we do the same. We have also, of course, maintained the traditional division into ten books performed originally by Scutellius.<sup>12</sup>

Readers may well be interested in the often varying translations of this difficult text. In view of our own translation, the past English versions of the *De mysteriis* by Thomas Taylor (1821) and Alexander Wilder (1911) deserve consideration. Before turning to these, however, a brief mention should be made of those in other modern languages. After Taylor’s English translation, the second in a modern language seems to be the French of Pierre Quillard (1895), followed by André Quillard’s second edition in 1948.<sup>13</sup> According to Sicherl, who provides an excellent survey of translations prior to those of Des Places and Sodano, the French translations are good, but do not match Taylor’s earlier version, which captures more fully the sense of the *De mysteriis*. In 1922, Theodor Hopfner published his German translation, which, like Quillard’s, was based on Parthey’s text, although with

<sup>11</sup> Sicherl (1957, 198–200).

<sup>12</sup> Although it is worth noting that, inasmuch as Scutellius’s division of the *De mysteriis* was carried out well after the loss of Porphyry’s *Epistle*, Iamblichus’s responses to Porphyry are not always sensibly arranged in the text as it stands; cf. Thillet (1968, 179); Saffrey (1993, 144–45; 1973, 281–82).

<sup>13</sup> On Quillard’s translation see Sicherl (1957, 203–4). Quillard believed that the *De mysteriis* was composed not by a single author but by a community of scholars, priests or philosophers.

deviations.<sup>14</sup> Hopfner translated not only for scholars but also for readers with an interest in the occult, which, after the First World War, was especially popular. Hopfner himself was an excellent scholar of ancient magic, and his *Griechisch-ägyptischer Offenbarungszauber* was a standard work on this topic. His translation of the *De mysteriis* (*Über die Geheimlehren*) is accompanied by a detailed introduction and by extensive notes. Although Hopfner was not a disciple of theosophy, his terminology and interpretation of the *De mysteriis* sometimes border on the theosophical.

In 1966 Édouard Des Places published his text and translation of the *De mysteriis* in the *Collection des universités de France*, with the patronage of the Association Guillaume Budé; this was reprinted in 1996, with some important additions to the bibliography. His introduction and notes are learned, though sometimes brief, and he has an especially good discussion of the importance of the *Chaldaean Oracles* for the *De mysteriis*, and a fine survey of its influence on subsequent ancient writers such as the emperor Julian, Saloustios<sup>15</sup> and Proclus. The translation is clear and readable, and generally makes good sense of the Greek text. Almost twenty years after Des Places's first edition, and more than forty years of research, A. R. Sodano, who published the fragments of Porphyry's *Epistle to Anebo* (*Porfirio, Lettera ad Anebo*, 1958), brought out his translation of *I misteri egiziane: Abammone, Lettera a Porfirio* (1984), with critical appendices and indices, and a detailed commentary.

The translations of Taylor and Wilder are, perhaps, of the most interest to readers of English.<sup>16</sup> Thomas Taylor (1738–1835) saw his task in translating the *De mysteriis* as making available “the most copious, the clearest and the most satisfactory defense extant of genuine ancient theology.” Indeed, for Taylor, Neoplatonism was “the most sublime theory, which is so congenial to the conceptions of the unperverted human mind that it can only be treated with ridicule and contempt in degraded, barren, and barbarous ages.” He claimed that “ignorance and impious fraud . . . have hitherto conspired to defame those inestimable works in which this and many other grand and important dogmas can alone

<sup>14</sup> On Hopfner and his translation see Sicherl (1957, 204–5).

<sup>15</sup> On the work of Saloustios (= Sallustius) see Clarke (1998).

<sup>16</sup> On the translations of Wilder and Taylor, see Sicherl (1957, 201–3); both are printed in Ronan (1989).

be found; and the theology of the ancients has been attacked with all the insane fury of ecclesiastical zeal, and all the imbecile flashes of mistaken wit." In his desire to bring the theology of the ancients to the modern world, Taylor made many translations of Plato and the later Platonists, but for him, the "divine" Iamblichus was excelled not even by Plato himself. Taylor's translation of the *De mysteriis*, preceded by fragments of Porphyry's *Epistle to Anebo*, was based on Gale's 1678 edition, and Taylor was well aware of the difficulties in translating Iamblichus's work, "not only from its sublimity and novelty, but also from the defects of the original." Given the difficulties that he faced, Taylor succeeded remarkably well in making his translation "as faithful and complete as possible."

Obviously, Taylor did not have access to the last 180 years of scholarship, yet though his English is sometimes archaic, his translation remains far preferable to that of Wilder, produced almost a century later. Wilder (1823–1908) was a physician, publicist and philosopher. From 1875 to 1895 he was Secretary of the National Eclectic Medical Association, and then President of the New York School of Philosophy, while holding the Professorship of Physiology and Psychology. Fairly representative of his works and interests are *New Platonism and Alchimey* (1869) and *The Worship of the Serpent* (1875). His *Theurgia, or The Egyptian Mysteries* was preceded by the fragments of Porphyry's *Epistle to Anebo*. Wilder was familiar with Taylor's translation, and though he also used Gale's text, no clear acknowledgement is made until a footnote on page twenty-eight. The translation itself aimed to express "the original, the whole original, and nothing but the original" and "withal good readable English." Certainly, Wilder's translation is readable, but not at all reliable, evidencing little knowledge of the technical terminology used by Iamblichus.<sup>17</sup>

In sum, a new English translation of Iamblichus, and one which takes into account previous scholarship, seems most desirable. We are indebted to the Budé text of Des Places, and to his learned introduction and notes, even though we frequently disagree with him. We have also availed ourselves of the considerable body of scholarship on Iamblichus that has appeared over

<sup>17</sup> He also makes radical changes to the arrangement of Books, his basis for which, given his lack of introduction, remains unknown.



the last fifty years. We hope that we have rendered a very difficult and often turgid text into contemporary English while preserving the sense of Iamblichus's Greek, a Greek with many technical terms and containing fragments of authors ranging from Heraclitus through Plato to the *Corpus Hermeticum*, the *Chaldaean Oracles* and the Greek magical papyri. The result is a text that a modern reader, even one equipped with a knowledge of ancient Greek, cannot always be sure that he understands. Clearly, the *De mysteriis* has as its background some centuries of interpretation of Platonic and Aristotelian Greek philosophy, Chaldaean thought, and Aegypto-Greek magic and religion, and all these strands must be recognised if a full appreciation of this remarkable document is to be attained.

## 2. IAMBlichus THE MAN

Little of substance is known of Iamblichus's life;<sup>18</sup> while we do possess a biographical sketch given by the late fourth century sophist, Eunapius of Sardis,<sup>19</sup> this portrait is deliberately hagiographical and frustratingly vague in factual detail. Reading between the lines of Eunapius, however, and helped by pieces of information from elsewhere, reasonable conjecture can produce probable data.

Eunapius reports (*Vit. soph.* 457) that Iamblichus was born in Chalcis "in Coele (Syria)." After Septimus Severus's division of the Syrian command in 194 C.E., this refers not to southern but to northern Syria, and so the Chalcis in question must be Chalcis ad Belum, modern Qinnasrin, a strategically important town to the east of the Orontes valley, on the road from Beroea (Aleppo) to Apamea, and from Antioch to the East.<sup>20</sup> The date of his birth is uncertain, but the tendency in recent scholarship has been to push it much earlier than the traditional date of c. 265 C.E. Alan

<sup>18</sup> Much of what follows is based on the life and works of Iamblichus as recounted in Dillon and Hershbell (1991), but contains numerous additions, exclusions and emendations.

<sup>19</sup> In his *Lives of the Philosophers and Sophists*.

<sup>20</sup> Vanderspoel (1988) has presented an interesting argument in favour of the Chalcis in Lebanon (modern Anjar), but not one so persuasive as to induce us to change our view.

Cameron, in “The Date of Iamblichus’s Birth,”<sup>21</sup> bases his conclusions on the assumption that the Iamblichus whose son Ariston is mentioned by Porphyry (*Vit. Plot.* 9) as having married Amphicleia, a female disciple of Plotinus, is our Iamblichus. This assumption seems reasonable, since Porphyry expects his readers to know who this Iamblichus is, and there is no other famous Iamblichus in this period and milieu. Porphyry’s language is ambiguous, but to gain some credible chronology, one assumes that Ariston married Amphicleia some time after Plotinus’s death, and probably not long before 301 C.E. when Porphyry composed the *Life*. Even so, and accepting that Ariston was much younger than Amphicleia, one cannot postulate a date for Iamblichus’s birth much later than 240. Iamblichus was not, then, much younger than Porphyry himself (born in 232), which may help to explain the rather uneasy pupil-teacher relationship they appear to have enjoyed.

The mid-third century was a profoundly disturbed time to be growing up in Syria. In 256 C.E., during Iamblichus’s early youth, the Persian King Shapur broke through the Roman defences around Chalcis and pillaged the whole of northern Syria, including Antioch (John Malalas, *Chron.* 295–296). It is not known how Iamblichus’s family weathered the onslaught but, being prominent figures (and especially if they were pro-Roman), they may well have withdrawn and sought refuge temporarily on the coast. According to Eunapius, Iamblichus was “of illustrious birth, and belonged to the well-to-do and fortunate classes” (*Vit. soph.* 457). It is remarkable that a Semitic name<sup>22</sup> was preserved by a distinguished family in this region, when so many of the well-to-do had long since taken on Greek and Roman names. But there were, in fact, ancestors of whom the family could be proud, if the philosopher Damascius may be believed. At the beginning of his *Life of Isidore*<sup>23</sup> he reports that Iamblichus was descended from the royal line of priest-kings of Emesa. Sampsigeramus, the first of these potentates to appear in history, won independence

<sup>21</sup> Cameron (1969).

<sup>22</sup> The original form of Iamblichus’s name is Syriac or Aramaic: *yam-liku*, a third person singular indicative or jussive of the root *mlk*, with *el* understood, meaning “he (sc. El) is king” or “may he rule!”

<sup>23</sup> This work has recently been re-assembled and translated by Athanasiasiadi (1999) as *The Philosophical History*.

from the Seleucids in the 60s B.C.E., and was in the entourage of Antony at the battle of Actium. He left a son, Iamblichus, to carry on the line, and the names "Sampsigeramus" and "Iamblichus" alternate in the dynasty until the end of the first century C.E. when they were dispossessed by Domitian. Inscriptional evidence, however, shows the family still dominant well into the second century.<sup>24</sup>

How or why a branch of the family got to Chalcis by the third century is not clear, but it may have been the result of a dynastic marriage, since Iamblichus's other distinguished ancestor mentioned by Damascius is Monimus (Arabic *Mun'eim*). This is not an uncommon name in the area, but the identity of the Monimus in question may be concealed in an entry by Stephanus of Byzantium (s.v. "Chalcis"), which reads: "*Chalcis*: fourth, a city in Syria, founded by Monicus the Arab." Monicus is a name not found elsewhere, and may well be a slip (either by Stephanus himself or a later scribe) for "Monimus." This would give Iamblichus an ancestor of suitable distinction, none other than the founder of his city.<sup>25</sup> What may have happened is that a daughter of the former royal house of Emesa married into the leading family of Chalcis, and one of her sons was called after his maternal grandfather.

There is no doubt, at any rate, that Iamblichus was of good family. Such an ancestry may have influenced his intellectual formation. His tendency as a philosopher, manifested in various ways, is always to connect Platonic doctrine with more ancient wisdom (often of a Chaldaean variety), and within Platonism itself it is he, more than any other, who is the author of the ramified hierarchy of levels of being (many identified with traditional gods and minor divinities), which is a feature of the later Athenian Platonism of Syrianus and Proclus. With Iamblichus and his advocacy of theurgy over theology, Platonism also became more explicitly a religion. Before his time, the mystery imagery so popular with Platonist philosophers (going back to Plato himself) was,

<sup>24</sup> *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie* V, 2212–2217. Cf. also John Malalas, *Chron.* 296.

<sup>25</sup> Unless of course the reference is to the god Monimos, attested by Iamblichus himself (ap. Julian, *Or.* 4.150c–d), worshipped at Emesa in association with the sun god. The royal family may conceivably have traced their ancestry to this deity, identified with the planet Mercury.

so far as can be seen, just that—imagery. With Iamblichus there is an earnest emphasis on ritual, enabling the emperor Julian to found his pagan church on this rather shaky rock.

At this point, the problem arises of who Iamblichus's teachers in philosophy were. Eunapius writes of a certain Anatolius, μετὰ Πορφύριον τὰ δεύτερα φερόμενος (*Vit. soph.* 457). This phrase, in earlier times, would simply have meant "took second place to,"<sup>26</sup> but a parallel in Photius, *Bibl.* 181 suggests that the phrase had come to mean "was deputy to." If this is so in Eunapius, it poses a problem. It has been suggested<sup>27</sup> that Iamblichus's teacher is identical with the Anatolius who was a teacher of Peripatetic philosophy in Alexandria in the 260s and later (in 274) consecrated bishop of Laodicea in Syria. This suggestion, however, comes up against grave difficulties: chronology requires that Iamblichus was a student no later than the 270s, so that it must be concluded that the relevant Anatolius (who is the dedicatee of Porphyry's *Homeric Questions*, and so probably a student of his), represented Porphyry in some way during his absence (perhaps in Sicily). This, however, presupposes a situation for which there is no evidence, namely that Porphyry established a school in Rome between his visits to Sicily, or that Plotinus had founded a school of which Porphyry was the titular head even in his absence in Sicily. Another possibility, of course, is that Eunapius was profoundly confused, but that conclusion seems to be a counsel of despair.

Eusebius, writing sometime after Porphyry's death (c. 305 C.E.), describes him as "he who was in our time established (καταστάς) in Sicily," which suggests a considerable stay there (*Hist. eccl.* 6.19.2).<sup>28</sup> Porphyry refers to himself as having returned to Rome at *Vit. Plot.* 2, but when that happened he does not indicate. That he returned by the early 280s, however, is a proposition with which few would disagree, and if Iamblichus studied with him, it would have occurred in this period. Our direct evidence of their association is not overwhelming but is generally accepted. Firstly, we have the dedication to Iamblichus of Porphyry's work *On the Maxim "Know Thyself."* We may also take some account

<sup>26</sup> For example, in Herodotus, *Hist.* 8.104.

<sup>27</sup> Dillon (1987, 866–67).

<sup>28</sup> Bidez (1964) takes this as referring only to the publication of Porphyry's work *Against the Christians*.

of Iamblichus's assertion in his *De anima* that he had "heard" (ἀκούω) Porphyry propound a certain doctrine,<sup>29</sup> and Eunapius's comment at *Vit. soph.* 458 that Iamblichus, after leaving his tutor Anatolius, "attached himself to Porphyry" (Πορφυρίῳ προσθεὶς ἐαυτὸν).

Speculation about the relationship between these two great men is irresistible in this context. Iamblichus is repeatedly, and often sharply, critical of his master's philosophical position, as can be seen in most of his works. In his *Timaeus* commentary, twenty-five of the thirty-two surviving fragments are critical, only seven signifying agreement. The same position is evident also in the *De anima*, and the commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*, preserved by Simplicius, though Simplicius reports that Iamblichus based his own commentary on that of Porphyry (*Exp. Cat.* 2.9 ff.), something also likely for his *Timaeus* commentary, so these statistics may be misleading. The *De mysteriis*, however, is a point-by-point refutation of Porphyry's *Letter to Anebo*, an epistle which launched a vicious attack on theurgy, more than likely aimed specifically at Iamblichus and his beliefs.<sup>30</sup>

Even as it is not known when or where Iamblichus studied with Porphyry, so it is not known when he left him, returned to Syria, and founded his own school. From the fact that he did make this move, rather than staying on as successor to Porphyry (he was, after all, his most distinguished pupil), we might conclude that there was a certain amount of tension between them, although this is not certain by any means. For Iamblichus's activities on his return to Syria we are dependent on Eunapius's account, which, with all its fantastic anecdotes, is claimed by its author to rest on an oral tradition descending to him from Iamblichus's senior pupil Aedesius, via his own revered master Chrysanthius. Unfortunately, Eunapius is vague on details of

<sup>29</sup> The problem here is that the verb ἀκούω with the genitive case came to be used in peculiar ways in later Greek to indicate acquaintance at various removes, so one cannot put full trust in this testimony. However, there is no real reason to doubt the notion that Porphyry and Iamblichus were acquainted.

<sup>30</sup> It was also a refutation of Porphyry's own earlier dabbings in this field, as expressed in the *Philosophy from Oracles*. Porphyry's personal association with Plotinus was more than likely the cause of his change of heart.

prime importance. Where, for instance, did Iamblichus establish his school? The evidence seems to be in favour of Apamea,<sup>31</sup> rather than his native Chalcis. This is not surprising: Apamea had been a distinguished centre of philosophy for well over a century, and was the hometown, and probably the base, of Numenius, the distinguished second-century Neopythagorean. It was also the place to which Plotinus's senior pupil Amelius retired in the 260s, no doubt because of admiration for Numenius. Amelius was dead by the time Porphyry wrote his commentary on the *Timaeus* (probably in the 290s), but he left his library and possessions to his adopted son Hostilianus Hesychius, who presumably continued to reside in Apamea.

Once established in Apamea, Iamblichus seems to have acquired support from a prominent local citizen, Sopater, and in Eunapius's account (*Vit. soph.* 458–459) he seems to be in possession of a number of suburban villas and a considerable group of followers. There are glimpses of him in the midst of his disciples, discoursing and fielding questions, disputing with rival philosophers, and leading school excursions to the hot springs at Gadara. The school seems to have been like many others in the Platonist tradition, a group of students living with or near their teacher, meeting with him daily, and probably dining with him, pursuing a set course of reading and study in the works of Plato and Aristotle, and holding disputations on set topics. In the *Anonymous Prolegomena to Platonic Philosophy*, we learn of a set course for students of ten Platonic dialogues, the design of which is attributed to Iamblichus.<sup>32</sup> It started with the *Alcibiades I*, continuing with the *Gorgias*, *Phaedo*, *Cratylus*, *Theaetetus*, *Sophist*, *Statesman*, *Phaedrus*, *Symposium* and *Philebus*, leading up to the two main dialogues of Platonic philosophy, the *Timaeus* and the *Parmenides*, the former “physical,” the latter “theological.”<sup>33</sup> Of

<sup>31</sup> There is some conflicting evidence from John Malalas (*Chron.* 12.312.11–12), indicating that Iamblichus was established with a school at Daphne, near Antioch, in the reigns of Maxentius and Galerius (305–312 C.E.), and Malalas says that he continued teaching there until his death. Malalas, despite his limitations, is not entirely unreliable on matters affecting his home area, so it is possible that Iamblichus spent some time in Daphne.

<sup>32</sup> Iamblichus was of course building upon earlier Middle Platonic systems of instruction, such as described in Albinus's *Isagoge*.

<sup>33</sup> It is surprising not to find any mention in this sequence of the *Republic* or the *Laws*. They were probably regarded as too long and, in the main, too

the dialogues, we have fragments of evidence for commentaries by Iamblichus on the *Alcibiades*, *Phaedo*, *Sophist*, *Phaedrus*, *Philebus*, *Timaeus* and *Parmenides*, the most extensive (preserved in Proclus's commentary on the same dialogue) being those on the *Timaeus*. The school's study of Aristotle would have concentrated mainly on the logical works (Iamblichus wrote a copious commentary on the *Categories*, heavily dependent on that of Porphyry, but with transcendental interpretations of his own), the *De anima*, and perhaps part of the *Metaphysics*. Iamblichus's ten volumes on Pythagoreanism, entitled collectively *A Compendium of Pythagorean Doctrine*, constituted another introductory course for his students. Iamblichus had strong Pythagorean sympathies, inherited from Numenius and Nicomachus of Gerasa, but his treatise *On the Pythagorean Way of Life* is unlikely to reflect much of the life in his own school, certainly in such matters as community of property or long periods of silence, or we would have heard about it from Eunapius.

Iamblichus seems to have lived in Apamea until the early 320s. A terminus is found in Sopater's departure for Constantinople to try his luck with imperial politics in 326/7, by which time his revered master was certainly dead. A most interesting testimony to Iamblichus's status in the 320s is provided by the letters included among the works of the emperor Julian.<sup>34</sup> These were composed some time between 315 and 320 by someone on the emperor Licinius's staff who was an admirer of Iamblichus. How the letters fell into the hands of Julian, or came to be included among his works, is uncertain, but he was an avid collector of Iamblichiana and seems to have encouraged a similar enthusiasm among his supporters, most notably Saloustios (= Sallustius), whose work of potted Platonism, *On the Gods and the World*,<sup>35</sup> was inspired by Iamblichus's lost treatise *On the Gods*. The author of the letters cannot be identified,<sup>36</sup> but Eunapius (*Vit. soph.* 458) gives the names of various disciples: Aedesius and Eustathius (who was Iamblichus's successor) from Cappadocia, and Theodorus

political, to be suitable for study as wholes; there is some evidence that sections, such as *Republic* 6, 7 and 10, and *Laws* 10, received due attention.

<sup>34</sup> *Ep.* 181; 183–187 Bidez-Cumont.

<sup>35</sup> On the identification of Julian's companion with the author of this treatise, see Clarke (1998, 347–50).

<sup>36</sup> For discussion see Barnes (1978).

(presumably of Asine) and Euphrasius from mainland Greece. Besides these, it is possible to identify Dexippus, author of a surviving commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*, and Hierius, master of the theurgist Maximus of Ephesus. There is a record of letters by Iamblichus to Sopater, Dexippus and Eustathius on philosophical subjects.

Respect for Iamblichus as a philosopher has increased in recent years, as his distinctive contribution to the doctrine of the later Athenian school of Neoplatonists becomes clearer. He is an influence of prime importance on Syrianus, and hence on Proclus, as both of them freely acknowledge. In this way he inaugurated a scholastic tradition of Platonism which, becoming more ramified in the works of such men as Damascius and Dionysius the Areopagite, descended to later Byzantine writers such as Michael Psellus, and, through the translations of William of Moerbeke and, later, of Marsilio Ficino, to the West. Iamblichus's commentaries seem not to have long survived the closing of the Academy in 529 C.E.; Damascius, Olympiodorus and Simplicius can all quote from them, as can Priscianus and John of Stobi from his *De anima* and letters, but Psellus and the Byzantine scholars after him were dependent on Proclus for their references to his technical works. Only his exoteric works, the *Compendium of Pythagorean Doctrine* and the *De mysteriis*, survived into later Byzantine times, as they still do, to give a somewhat distorted and inadequate view of his achievements.

Finally, let us briefly address the reputation which Iamblichus acquired in later times for magical practices, an accusation which he himself would hotly deny. Eunapius's account portrays him as an enigmatic but reluctant wonder-worker. While he is credited with numerous displays of intuition and miraculous power,<sup>37</sup> Eunapius emphasises that these acts were performed either reluctantly or in private (*Vit. soph.* 458–459).<sup>38</sup> He reports that Iamblichus's students were obsessed with the idea that, while he prayed, he rose into the air and turned golden, a notion which

<sup>37</sup> Eunapius, *Vit. soph.* 459–460 also says that there are countless reports of other miraculous feats performed by Iamblichus which he does not record in his desire to keep his report to a supposedly more reliable core of information.

<sup>38</sup> Fowden (1982, 50) argues that Christians favoured public displays of their miraculous powers, while the pagan tendency was to perform such miracles only for the benefit of the holy man's immediate circle of followers.



Iamblichus himself dismissed. Plagued by the petitions of his students, however, Iamblichus did invoke two water-spirits (identified as Eros and Anteros) while at the hot springs at Gadara, saying at the time, “it is impious for such things to be demonstrated, but for your sakes it shall be done.” Iamblichus asserts over and over in the *De mysteriis* that all things come from the gods, and that all wonders or demonstrations of power are their work alone (see I.21.66; II.11.95–99; III.1.100–101; III.18–19; III.22.153–154; III.31.178–179). He also took seriously the dangers of arrogance and impiety, seeing morality and virtue as a pre-requisite in those who would perform the holy rites, and warning us in ringing tones of the dangers awaiting those who attempt to meddle in divine powers without due deference and humility. The demonstration of the miraculous was entirely a divine prerogative according to Iamblichus; wonder-working by man was at best impious, at worst an example of meaningless sorcery. It is Iamblichus’s determination to distinguish between worthless magic and divine theurgy that dominates and defines the subject matter of the *De mysteriis*, to which we must now turn.

### 3. THE *DE MYSTERIIS*: A DEFENCE OF THEURGY, AND AN ANSWER TO PORPHYRY’S *LETTER TO ANEBO*

Various assessments of the *De mysteriis* have been made over the last century. A great scholar of ancient Greek religion, M. P. Nilsson, referred to it as a “basic book for religion in late antiquity,”<sup>39</sup> while E. R. Dodds considered it “a manifesto of irrationalism”<sup>40</sup> and Des Places “a breviary of paganism in decline.”<sup>41</sup> More recent scholars, however, have shown that the *De mysteriis* is a masterful attempt to combine the teachings of revelation literature with those of Neoplatonism, and to give theurgic rites a philosophical basis.<sup>42</sup> The process of theurgy,

<sup>39</sup> Nilsson (1961, 448).

<sup>40</sup> Dodds (1951, 287).

<sup>41</sup> Des Places (1996, 12).

<sup>42</sup> See e.g. Dalsgaard Larsen (1972); Nasemann (1991); Shaw (1995); Clarke (2001).

which for our purposes can be defined as religious ritual demonstrating supernatural power,<sup>43</sup> both symbolised and encapsulated the extraordinary miracle of the soul's conversion back to its divine cause: ὑπὲρ φύσιν or ὑπερφυσῆς (lit. "supernatural") was a denotation of god (see *Myst.* I.18.54.8; VII.2.251.9) taken up decisively by those Neoplatonists writing after the *De mysteriis* was composed,<sup>44</sup> and applied to the theurgic process within the *De mysteriis* itself (IX.1.273.7–8; III.31.179.1). In this lay the definitive difference between theurgy and magic, the latter being a process operating within the bounds of nature, manipulating and exploiting natural forces rather than demonstrating the causative power behind and beyond them (see *Myst.* IX.1.273; X.3.288).<sup>45</sup>

The *De mysteriis* was composed some time between 280 and 305,<sup>46</sup> yet less than a century later the emperor Julian (361–363) was unsuccessful in his attempt to halt the growing influence of the "Galileans" (Christians) and hail a return to the ancestral gods; just twenty years after his brief rule, sacrifices were proscribed by Theodosius I (379–395) and Christianity declared the official state religion. It was the teachings of Iamblichus that Julian hailed and used as doctrines that could guide him and other non-Christians to a greater understanding of their ancestral gods. Iamblichus, writing under the assumed guise of the Egyptian prophet "Abamon," is now widely accepted as being the author of the *De mysteriis*. Proclus's familiarity with the work is confirmed by his *Commentary on the Timaeus* (*Comm. Tim.* I.386.9–13),

<sup>43</sup> The definition must vary from author to author, but Iamblichus's concept is our concern here. On the origins of the terms θεωργός and θεωργία, see Lewy (1978, 461–66), and for other suggestions for the definition of theurgy see Dodds (1951, 283–84); Wallis (1972, 3 and 107); Blumenthal (1993).

<sup>44</sup> See Proclus, *Comm. Parm.* 956.32; *Comm. Tim.* I.410.5–14; cf. *Comm. Parm.* 766.13; 946.35; *Comm. Tim.* I.383.10; 3.275.26; cf. Damascius, *Princ.* I.304.1–9.

<sup>45</sup> For the *De mysteriis* as a treatise on the supernatural, see Clarke (2001).

<sup>46</sup> For its assignation to c. 300 C.E. see Saffrey (1971, 231–33); Athanasiasidi (1993, 116 n. 13); Dalsgaard Larsen (1972, 196). For a suggestion of 280 C.E. see Dillon (1973, 13 and 18).

which thus supports his attribution of it to “the divine Iamblichus.”<sup>47</sup> In addition, the *De mysteriis* reveals numerous parallels with Iamblichean doctrine already known from other sources, and it seems more than likely that Iamblichus’s well-documented belief that the soul changed and was damaged during its descent into the material world<sup>48</sup> was what led to his stipulation that theurgy was the only means of re-ascent to god.<sup>49</sup> Iamblichus also makes constant reference to Platonic and other philosophic and religious principles that make the identity of the author definitively Hellenic in his philosophical outlook or experience. These citations we have attempted to highlight en route.

Theodor Hopfner proposed the somewhat unlikely theory that Iamblichus resorted to the pseudonym “Abamon” in order to conceal from the Christians the dissent among Platonists, specifically himself and his old mentor Porphyry.<sup>50</sup> In fact, unlike Porphyry, who was a formidable opponent of Christianity, Iamblichus seems to have taken little notice of the new religion, whose full domination of the empire he did not live to see. In no extant work does he specifically mention the Christians, though he may be alluding to them at *Myst.* III.31.179–180 where he berates “the opinion of atheists that all divination is accomplished by the evil daemon.”<sup>51</sup> Gregory Shaw argues that there was, for Iamblichus,

<sup>47</sup> This is reported in the introduction to Psellus’s eleventh-century introduction, printed at the head of Parthey’s edition of 1857 and that of Des Places. Psellus’s scholion heads our two oldest manuscripts, V and M, both of which are dated around 1460. See Thillet (1968, 173). For a wry outline of the debate on authorship, see Saffrey (1993, 145–46); see also Saffrey (1999); Des Places (1996, 5–8); Nasemann (1991, 14–17). Derchain (1963, 220–26) maintains that Abamon really existed, arguing that the author of the *De mysteriis* shows too much knowledge of Egyptian mysteries to have been anyone but an Egyptian priest, a claim which is manifestly untrue and ignores the obvious question of how an Egyptian priest, on the same argument, could have come to learn as much about Greek tradition as is revealed in the *De mysteriis*. Cf. the claims of Scott (1936, 42) and see Thillet (1968, 174–76) for a discussion and refutation of Derchain’s views.

<sup>48</sup> Iamblichus, *Comm. Tim.* frg. 87 Dillon; cf. ap. Priscian, *Metaphr.* 32.13–19; ap. Stobaeus 1:379.11–380.29. For further discussion see Steel (1978, 38–61); Finamore (1985, 59–91).

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Dodds (1963, xviii–xx).

<sup>50</sup> Hopfner (1922, x).

<sup>51</sup> The charge of atheism was frequently levied at the Christians because of their refusal to worship the ancestral gods and/or acknowledge the divinity of

a far more pressing matter than the rise of Christianity, and this was the serious conflict between “old ways” and “new ways,” between the ancient traditions handed down by the gods, and those recently invented by the zealously innovative Hellenes.<sup>52</sup> Iamblichus was essentially interested in re-awakening and preserving man’s contact with the ancestral gods, and in arguing that theurgy (or “god-work”) rather than theology (or “god-talk”) was the only way of achieving this.

If Iamblichus was unconcerned with the pressures of the pagan-Christian debate, why *did* he write in the guise of the purported Egyptian prophet Abamon? The decision was an interesting one, and sparked by Porphyry’s attack to which he is making his reply. Porphyry addressed a letter, preserved for us only in fragments,<sup>53</sup> ostensibly to one Anebo, an Egyptian priest. Scholars have argued over the question whether this character actually existed, and the answer remains unproven;<sup>54</sup> what seems indisputable, however, is that the letter was in some way aimed at Iamblichus and, more specifically, at what Porphyry saw as his ex-pupil’s interest in the occult, typified in the Hellenic mind by certain Egyptian (or pseudo-Egyptian) magical practices. It is tempting to speculate that Porphyry’s particular dislike for Egyptian conjurers may have been sparked by Plotinus’s experiences as reported in Porphyry’s *Vita Plotini*, which presents a vivid picture of the suspicious and potentially dangerous practices of Egyptian mystic moguls. Iamblichus seems to believe that he is the true target of the letter to Anebo (*Myst.* I.1.2.5–7), not

the emperor. At *Myst.* X.2 Iamblichus may again have the Christians in mind when he refers to “certain inept preposterous people” who “mock those who worship the gods.”

<sup>52</sup> Shaw (1995, 3–4).

<sup>53</sup> Not only in Iamblichus’s comments but also in reports by Eusebius and others. Sodano (1958) has attempted to reconstruct the letter.

<sup>54</sup> The name receives no other mention except by Eusebius who is quoting Porphyry’s letter, and it is often assumed that the name is fictitious, cf. Bidez (1964, 81 n. 3); Sodano (1958, xxxvii); Thillet (1968, 176–77). However, Proclus as reported in Psellus’s scholion at the head of the *De mysteriis* seems to imply that Anebo existed, for while the name Abamon is asserted as a pseudonym for Iamblichus, the *Epistle* is noted simply as an address by Porphyry to Anebo. Saffrey (1971, 231–33) points out that Iamblichus’s school at Apamea included at least one Egyptian according to Eunapius (*Vit. soph.* 473), and suggests that Anebo might have been a member of Iamblichus’s circle.

least, he argues, because he is the only one capable of answering the challenges it raises. The fact that he describes Anebo, Porphyry's supposed addressee, as his (or rather "Abamon's") pupil (μαθητήρ), is a quite pleasing poke in the eye for Porphyry;<sup>55</sup> although "Abamon" claims that his exact identity is unimportant, and instructs Porphyry to regard him as *any* Egyptian priest, discounting identity or rank (I.1.3.10–11), this seems to be something of a conceit,<sup>56</sup> and the underlying feeling throughout the work is that he is very important indeed.<sup>57</sup>

Iamblichus's material is dictated by the questions and challenges raised by Porphyry, and it is worth pausing to comment on Porphyry's position. His search for some kind of *via universalis* was as earnest as that of Plotinus, but seems to have been less successful;<sup>58</sup> prone, by his own admission, to bouts of depression, and suicidal on at least one occasion (Porphyry, *Vit. Plot.* 11; Eunapius, *Vit. soph.* 456), Porphyry was a man who believed that he was responsible for his own moral salvation (see Porphyry, *Abst.* 2.49.1–2), and who sought to justify his entire existence through philosophy. As a genuine man of questions, he was reticent about giving concrete answers, was able to concede defeat on occasion,

<sup>55</sup> Hopfner (1924, 7) notes that Iamblichus allies himself with the Egyptian prophets as opposed to the hierogrammatists who were of lower rank, *Myst.* I.1.3. Cf. Des Places (1996, 217) and Sodano (1958, xxxviii) on this priestly hierarchy.

<sup>56</sup> For this device used with reference to the speaker's own identity, Ps.-Demosthenes 59.115 provides a perfect example: "regard me, the speaker, not as Apollodorus . . ."

<sup>57</sup> Contrast Dalsgaard Larsen (1972, 157) who sees Iamblichus's self-introduction as a wholly genuine exhortation for us to concentrate on the doctrine rather than his identity.

<sup>58</sup> Augustine, *Civ.* 10.32 reports (triumphantly) that Porphyry concluded his *De regressu* with the statement that he had been unable to discover any philosophical or religious sect offering a satisfactory "universal way" for the liberation of the soul, having explored "true philosophy," the "ethics and disciplines of the Indians," and the "*inductio* of the Chaldaeans." On this see Smith (1974, 136–41). Iamblichus claims to be able to show Porphyry the Way of Hermes, revealed by Ammon and interpreted by Bitys, at *Myst.* VIII.5.267.11–268.1; cf. X.7, this in response to Porphyry's demand for the answer to salvation to be revealed according to the Egyptian Way. Cf. Sodano (1958, 30). See also Scott (1936, 4:72–73) and cf. Clark in Miles (1999, 124).

and admitted to changing his mind (Porphyry, *Vit. Plot.* 18).<sup>59</sup> Porphyry's rigorous questions made him a fearsome opponent,<sup>60</sup> indeed his formidable polemic *Against the Christians* was not allowed to survive the Christian empire. Iamblichus was facing no mean feat in answering his challenges, challenges which were far more powerful than any that we might issue in their wake, for they came from inside the Neoplatonic circle itself, and struck at its very core.

Pseudonymous and anonymous authorship was reasonably common in antiquity, and it particularly befits Iamblichus, who would have been steeped in the bizarre traditions surrounding the authorship of the *Chaldaean Oracles* and the Hermetic corpus, as well as Orphic and Pythagorean literature; indeed, Iamblichus hints at the fact that he is a part of this tradition.<sup>61</sup> Despite the official attribution of philosophical, religious and magical texts to various divine authors, their ancient readers were not so foolish as to swallow this conceit whole. Iamblichus was aware that Hermetic and Pythagorean works were *attributed* to Hermes and Pythagoras, and clearly understood these figures as the origin of or the inspiration for such works, rather than as their direct authors. (See I.1.1–2; VIII.4.265.13–266.1; *Vit. Pyth.* 29.158;

<sup>59</sup> He is represented severally as undecided on various crucial issues (Iamblichus ap. Stobaeus 1:365.17–18; Augustine, *Civ.* 10.9; Eunapius, *Vit. soph.* 457 believed Porphyry to have changed his views as he grew older). Cf. Athanassiadi (1993, 117). Smith (1987, 722–25) suggests that too much credit has been given to the evidence for Porphyry's supposed variability and/or development, pointing out that we are faced with hostile sources which may not comprehend the complexity of Porphyry's theories and/or his fondness for the presentation of alternative views. This is acute, but Smith shows signs of a tendency to equate consistency of opinion with quality of thought and a desire to rescue Porphyry from the charge of indecisiveness; one might rather accept the hostile accounts as evidence for Porphyry's possession of the far more respectable characteristics of open-mindedness and a willingness to re-think one's own perspectives.

<sup>60</sup> See Porphyry, *Vit. Plot.* 13 and cf. 18 on his correspondence with Amelius.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Fowden (1986, 1–2 and 86–87); Sint (1960). The Hermetic discourses which purport to be addresses by Hermes to Tat, Asclepius or Ammon might seem particularly relevant given that they appear to be written from one pseudonymous character to another. Note also Edelstein's (1962) interesting remarks on Plato's anonymity and/or pseudonymity within his dialogues.

31.198).<sup>62</sup> With this in mind, Iamblichus's background role is justified as a link in the golden chain of anonymous interpreters of the divine word.

There is a tacit link made between "Abamon" and Hermes, θεὸς ὁ τῶν λόγων ἡγεμὼν, with whose name Iamblichus says all works of this kind are inscribed (I.1.2.1-3).<sup>63</sup> The exact identity of Hermes named here is ambiguous, since Iamblichus exploits the supposed attributes of both the Greek Hermes and of the divine or semi-divine Hermes Trismegistus, a late-antique amalgam of Thoth and Hermes. Thoth was believed to be the divine scribe of ritual texts and formulae, the inventor of writing, guardian of wisdom, knowledge and science, and was the supposed author of much of the Egyptian (or pseudo-Egyptian) sacred literature in circulation. The Greek Hermes's defining characteristic in the Hellenistic period was as the interpreter of divine will to mankind, and to the Stoics he symbolised the creative λόγος.<sup>64</sup> Putting himself in a similar (although deferential) role to Hermes,<sup>65</sup> Iamblichus in his priestly guise claims to represent and speak for all the members of his caste.

Iamblichus allies himself with the ancient holy ranks of the Egyptian caste, and reminds us of the tradition that the Greek philosophers (including "Pythagoras, Plato, Democritus, Eudoxus and many others") first learnt their wisdom from the

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Plutarch, *Is. Os.* 375f. See Dalsgaard Larsen (1972, 156); Fowden (1986, 187).

<sup>63</sup> To describe a great orator as "the very model of Hermes, god of language/eloquence" was also a rhetorical nicety, dating back to the description of Demosthenes by Aelius Aristides, *Contr. Plat.* 307.6 Jebb. Cf. Julian *Or.* 7.237c; Eunapius, *Vit. soph.* 490; Damascius, *Hist. phil.* frg. 13A3.

<sup>64</sup> Fowden (1986, 22-24) and cf. Des Places (1996, 217). See also Fowden (1986, 201-2) on Hermes, Hermes Trismegistus and the "Hermaic Chain," representative of the divine λογισμὸς emanating from God.

<sup>65</sup> Dalsgaard Larsen (1972, 157) argues that Iamblichus poses as an Egyptian prophet, not as Hermes himself, in order to give his work philosophical credence, and to highlight his function as an interpreter of religious writings and ritual. Cf. also Plato's distinction at *Tim.* 72b between the μάντιες and the προφῆται who interpret the mantic apparitions, and in the *Ion* where the overall argument is that an inspired poet is different from (and in need of) an interpreter.

Egyptians (I.1.2.8–3.2).<sup>66</sup> This, as Saffrey points out,<sup>67</sup> reveals the true Greek context of Iamblichus's standpoint from the very start. The notion that Iamblichus, in his role as Abamon, is an exponent of the ancient Egyptian mysteries and a teacher of wisdom, holds throughout the treatise, yet throughout he also allows himself frequent references to definitively Greek authorities, which serve as constant reminders of his true identity. Iamblichus's citations include Heraclitus, Plato, Aristotle and Plotinus, and his discussions of religious niceties range from the most famous of Greek oracles to dream-interpretation, the flutes of Olympus and Marsyas, Pan and his nymphs, and the priest at Kastabala.

The Egyptian or pseudo-Egyptian backdrop to the *De mysteriis*, and Iamblichus's assumed Egyptian persona, has caused some considerable interest amongst scholars;<sup>68</sup> not least, there has been some debate about the exact meaning of the name "Abamon." The discussion has been etymological, and has centred around the assumption that the name of the Egyptian god Ammon is contained within the pseudonym and provides the key to its meaning. Recently, Saffrey argued that the name means "Father of Ammon," since *aba* is Syriac, Chaldaean and Hebrew for "father";<sup>69</sup> this assessment of the name in terms of an Egyptian religious title combined with Syrian or Chaldaean etymology might seem an attractive possibility, since it combines rather nicely Iamblichus's real and assumed ethnic identities. Saffrey draws our attention to the Greek term *θεοπάτωρ* in Porphyry's *Sententiae* 32.7, as a name for one who has reached the highest

<sup>66</sup> Cf. *Myst.* VII.5.258; Plutarch, *Is. Os.* 364d; Proclus, *Theol. plat.* 1.5.25–26; Plato, *Tim.* 21e–22b; *Phaedr.* 275b; *Leg.* 819b; *Phileb.* 18b; *Charm.* 156b–157c; Aristotle, *Met.* 981a21–26; Damascius, *Hist. phil.* frg. 4A16–17. Cf. Shaw (1995, 7); Fowden (1986, 15). At *Myst.* VIII.5.268.3 Iamblichus mentions Sais in Egypt, where Solon reputedly learned from the Egyptians and translated some of their work.

<sup>67</sup> Saffrey (1999, 316–17).

<sup>68</sup> Note the excellent comments by Shaw (1995, 7, 21–22). Fowden (1986, 135) argues that the Egyptian background is crucial to the work. Cf. also Dillon (1973, 13). Dalsgaard Larsen (1972, 174–75, 196) tries to suggest that the strong Egyptian influence is evidence that Iamblichus composed the *De mysteriis* during his supposed sojourn at Alexandria.

<sup>69</sup> Saffrey (1971, 234–35). Hopfner (1924, 1) reads it as "spirit of Amon," and is followed by Dunand (1963, 137 n. 1).



level of virtue, and he also highlights Psellus's attribution of the term to the master of theurgic or hieratic virtue at *Omnif. doctr.* 74.47.1–13.<sup>70</sup> However, Saffrey can find no mention of θεοπάτωρ in Iamblichus's writings, and this is surely problematic;<sup>71</sup> one would certainly expect the term to appear in the *De mysteriis* were it the title of a master-theurgist, and especially if Iamblichus were attempting to reinforce his position as such through his pseudonym, as Saffrey implies.

In fact, the assumption that the name Abamon refers to the god Ammon seems unlikely, for three reasons. Firstly, while Iamblichus does mention the god Ammon three times, he does not attach any great significance to him in the way that we might expect given the current theories on his pseudonym. At no point do we get the impression that Ammon holds any more significance for Iamblichus than any of the other Egyptian, Greek, or Aegypto-Greek deities mentioned, some famous and some obscure. There are, in total, six mentions of Hermes, three of Osiris, two of Isis, Ptah and Bitys, and one of Typhon, Emeph and Ikton in the *De mysteriis*; what is more, the three mentions of Ammon all occur amongst a veritable plethora of other names: of gods, of famous men, and of sacred places.<sup>72</sup> Iamblichus's most notable mention of Ammon occurs only at the very end of his work, where he is discussing the Egyptian theological hierarchy; in this system, Ammon represents “demiurgic intellect, the champion of truth and wisdom, entering into generation and leading the unseen power of the hidden doctrines into light” (VIII.3.263.8–11). Iamblichus then mentions him again a little later in the same context (VIII.5.268.1). Other than this, Iamblichus comments elsewhere that Ammon sent a dream to King Lysander (III.3.108.11); this mention, it is worth noting, may have been sparked off simply by a chain of thought on Iamblichus's part, for

<sup>70</sup> Saffrey (1971, 235–37).

<sup>71</sup> Saffrey (1971, 238) finds only αὐτοπάτωρ (*Myst.* VIII.2.262.3; cf. VIII.2.261.13), μονοπάτωρ (VIII.2.261.14) and οὐσιοπάτωρ (VIII.2.262.6).

<sup>72</sup> *Myst.* III.3.108 for Asklepios, Alexander, Dionysos, Aphoutis, Lysander, Ammon; VIII.3.262–264 for Emeph, Ikton, Amoun, Ptah, Hephaistos, Osiris; VIII.5.267–268 for Hermes, Bitys, Ammon, and the temple of Sais in Egypt.

he has just mentioned Alexander who claimed to be the son of Zeus-Ammon.<sup>73</sup>

Secondly, it is highly unlikely, in our view, that Iamblichus would label himself the father of a god, most especially the father of the demiurge (which, we have just seen, is Ammon's declared role). It is a well-attested and fundamental Iamblichean principle that the soul, most especially the embodied soul, is both separate from and inferior to the gods; Iamblichus consistently emphasises this fact, and chastises Porphyry and others for not grasping this essential truth.<sup>74</sup> While the theurgist may, at his most elevated, ascend to the order of angels through the grace of god and may thus, as Shaw has argued, participate in the eternal creative process of the cosmos,<sup>75</sup> he can never be regarded as above and beyond the status of the gods by nature. This attitude, more than any other, dictates Iamblichus's view of theurgy in the *De mysteriis*, and results in his insistence on the necessity of miracles and/or the supernatural.

Thirdly, the two occurrences of the pseudonym, printed as Ἀβάμμωνος by Des Places in his edition, are both in fact conjectures by Thomas Gale.<sup>76</sup> Both V and M read Ἀβάμωνος at the first mention and Ἀβάμμωνος at the second. Gale's conjecture that we should insert an extra  $\mu$ , and change the  $\sigma$  to an  $\omega$  in the first instance, was perhaps based upon the assumption that the pseudonym refers to the god Ammon, since the name was almost invariably spelt using a double  $\mu$  and an  $\omega$  (Ἀμμῶν). It seems that the glossing over of Gale's emendations by Des Places, and earlier by Parthey,<sup>77</sup> has provided tacit and false support for the

<sup>73</sup> See Plutarch, *Alex.* 27.5–9; Diodorus Siculus 17.51.1–4.

<sup>74</sup> See the famous assertion at Iamblichus ap. Stobaeus 1:365.7–366.11. See Dillon (1973, 42) and Shaw (1995, 71) for translations and discussion. See also *Myst.* I.12; III.16–18.

<sup>75</sup> *Myst.* II.2.69; II.6.83; cf. I.12.41–42. Shaw (1995, 45–57).

<sup>76</sup> The fact that Ἀβάμμωνος is a conjecture is indicated in the notes to Des Places's text, although he does not clarify the editor responsible. The conjecture can be traced to Gale's edition, where the pseudonym is written as Ἀβάμμωνος, without comment. Cf. Sodano (1958, xxv n. 127) and Scott (1936, 28 n. 2).

<sup>77</sup> Parthey accepted the conjecture without criticism, stating in a note that the core manuscripts read Ἀβάμμωνος. He makes no comment on the version Ἀβάμωνος.

view that Ammon is the key to Iamblichus's pseudonym.<sup>78</sup> Saffrey, who is aware of the emendation, attempts to get round the problem by claiming that the god's name could be rendered either Ἀμμῶν, Ἀμῶν or Ἀμοῦν;<sup>79</sup> in fact, while there are several hundred instances of Ἀμμῶν in Greek literature,<sup>80</sup> there are a mere handful which appear as Ἀμοῦν<sup>81</sup> and none that we can find of Ἀμῶν.<sup>82</sup> Saffrey argues that the Greeks recognised the spelling "Amoun" as representative of the original Egyptian deity, in contrast to the Hellenised Zeus-Ammon, and even cites Iamblichus, alongside Origen and Plutarch, as a key witness to this approach. However, he conveniently ignores the fact that Iamblichus, despite the pseudo-Egyptian context of his work, follows what is (according to Saffrey himself) the traditional Greek spelling of Ammon twice in the *De mysteriis* (at VIII.5.268.1 and III.3.108.11), and uses the Egyptian version only once, at VIII.3.263.10; this exceptional case, it becomes clear in context, is rendered thus in a deliberate imitation of the Egyptian spelling, for Iamblichus says that the god is "called *Amoun* in the Egyptian tongue" (Ἀμοῦν κατὰ τὴν

<sup>78</sup> See e.g. Hopfner (1924, 3), despite spelling the god's name "Amun" and "Amon," and Dunand (1963, 137 n. 1).

<sup>79</sup> Saffrey (1971, 234). He does not, however, comment on the vowel exchange (*o* for *ω*), despite the fact that *ω* is maintained consistently in all cases in our sources for the name Ammon.

<sup>80</sup> To list just some examples, Plato, *Pol.* 257b6; *Phaedr.* 274d4; 275c8; *Leg.* 738c1; *Alc.* 148e3; 149b2; Theophrastus, *Hist. plant.* 2.3.5.12; 5.3.7.1; Aristophanes, *Av.* 619; 716; Diodorus Siculus 17.49.2.5; 50.4.3; 108.3.4; 115.6.5; Pausanias, *Descr.* 3.18.3.2; Apollodorus 2.43.7; Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Comm. Arist. Met.* 63.25; Porphyry, *Quaest. hom.* 35.21; Proclus, *Comm. Tim.* 1.177.14; Stobaeus 1.49.4.2; 2.4.18.53.

<sup>81</sup> The only examples being: Herodotus, *Hist.* 2.42.17–20; Athanasius, *Vit. Ant.* 26.929.11.17.33; 26.932.3.4.8; Palladius, *Hist. laus.* 7.6.3; 8.1.1; 8.1.7; 8.4.3; 8.6.6; Sozomenus, *Hist. eccl.* 1.14.1.1; 1.14.5.3; 1.14.8.7; Stobaeus 1.5.16.2; Origen, *Cels.* 5.41.14; 5.45.1–6; 5.46.11–12; *Philoc.* 17.3.3; 17.5.11–12. Almost all of these examples occur where an author is discussing the god as peculiarly Egyptian; note that Plutarch and Origen usually render the name as Ἀμμῶν when not discussing it in the context of its Egyptian origin, see Plutarch, *Lys.* 20.4.6; 20.5.4–6; 25.3.4; *Cim.* 18.7.6; *Nic.* 13.2.2; *Alex.* 3.1.3; 26.11.1; 27.5.3; 47.12.2; 50.11.5; 72.3.6 and Origen, *Cels.* 5.34.14; 5.36.1,3,8; 7.3.2; 7.6.4,6; 7.7.35; *Comm. Jo.* 6.54.277.5; *Or.* 4. 2.11–13.

<sup>82</sup> This spelling refers not to the Egyptian god but to the region East of the Jordan mentioned in the Bible. See e.g. Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 10.14.6.3.

τῶν Αἰγυπτίων γλῶσσαν λέγεται).<sup>83</sup> Anyway, assuming that Psel-lus has noted the pseudonym correctly, its nominative must be Abamôn, not Abamoun — Saffrey does not account for this, despite his claim that Iamblichus uses the spelling “Amoun” in the *De mysteriis*.

Disappointing as it is, there does not appear to be any etymological meaning behind the pseudonym. The suffix -βαμων occurs numerous times in Greek literature, and generally pertains to walking/travelling or to feet, which seems wholly irrelevant—the term can hardly mean “legless,” unless Iamblichus was in an uncharacteristically jocular mood when he invented his guise.<sup>84</sup> The term τετραβάμων (four-footed) appears in a Greek magical text which seems to be quoting a list of divine and magical epithets going back as far as the fifth century B.C.E., and it refers here to the goat-servant of Demeter;<sup>85</sup> we also find μακρὰβάμων, βραδυβάμων, βραχυβάμων, and ταχυβάμων as technical terms in Aristotle (*Physiog.* 813a3–7). However, all this proves nothing more than the fact that Iamblichus would presumably have been familiar with -βαμων as a word-ending.<sup>86</sup> More importantly, we do find some contemporary examples of Graeco-Egyptian names ending in -αμμων, including “Apammon” in a fourth/fifth century private letter from an unknown Christian.<sup>87</sup> Iamblichus seems, therefore, to have made a sensible choice of an Egyptian-sounding name, and we need read no further significance than this into its meaning.

<sup>83</sup> An exact parallel can be found in Plutarch: “most people believe that Amoun is the name given to Zeus in the land of the Egyptians, a name which we, with a slight alteration, pronounce as Ammon” (Plutarch, *Is. Os.* 354c–d, trans. Babbitt, LCL).

<sup>84</sup> We owe this mischievous reading to Bob Sharples.

<sup>85</sup> SEG 38 (1988): 524–27, no. 1837; see Jordan (1988). For τετραβάμων cf. Euripides, *Tro.* 517; *El.* 476.

<sup>86</sup> For further occurrences, see e.g. Aeschylus, *Cho.* 591; frg. 225; Euripides, *Tro.* 275; Sophocles, frg. 884; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Ep.* 2.1.3.

<sup>87</sup> We are grateful to Lene Rubinstein for this, who came across the occurrence of the name Apammon in the *Copenhagen Papyri* 25 (1981), lines 4 and 22. Parthey (1857, 1) also lists the examples Cronammon, Heraclammon, Parammon, Philammon, Phoebammon, Plusammon, Sarapammon, Suchammon and Tapammon, although he does not state his sources.

#### 4. IAMBlichus'S KNOWLEDGE OF EGYPTIAN RELIGION AND MYTHOLOGY

Whatever the meaning of the pseudonym "Abamon," there can be no question but that the man behind the guise has acquired some knowledge of Egyptian religion and mythology. While this is not of a degree of esotericism or accuracy to raise any serious question as to the identification of Iamblichus as the author of the *De mysteriis*, it is certainly of interest to examine it, and to speculate as to the sources from which he may have derived it.

It is only in Books VII and VIII that "Abamon" turns to an explicit exposition of Egyptian theology, so we may confine our attention to those passages. In Book VII.1-3, he undertakes an allegorical exegesis of four key "symbols" of Egyptian religion, "mud," the lotus, the solar barque, and the zodiac, his account in each case according tolerably well with what we know of Egyptian beliefs. In the latter two chapters of the book he gives some attention to the use of "meaningless names" (ἄσημα ὀνόματα) in magical/theurgic practice, also reasonably in line at least with what we find in the Demotic as well as the Greek magical papyri. In VIII.3 he purports to give an account of Egyptian theology, which poses some rather worse problems. In VIII.1, he himself alludes to two sources, the first, one Seleucus, of uncertain identity (see note ad loc.), but the second, Manetho, probably providing the ultimate answer to the question of Iamblichus's knowledge of things Egyptian—though he is also familiar with the works of the Egyptian Stoic philosopher Chaeremon (VIII.4.266), for which, however, he does not have much use.

Manetho of Sebennytus was a High Priest at Heliopolis under the first two Ptolemies, flourishing in the first half of the third century B.C.E., and through his various works—the *Aigyptiaka*, a history of Egypt up to 323 B.C.E., his *Hiera Biblos*, or *Sacred Book*, and others—he seems to have constituted the chief conduit of Egyptian lore to the Greek-speaking world. There is really nothing in Books VII or VIII that Iamblichus could not have picked up from him, or from later authors drawing on him.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>88</sup> What we are to make of the 36,525 books of Hermes that Manetho reportedly speaks of (*Myst.* VIII.1) is a moot point. We have suggested (see note

Let us look first, then, at the “symbols” expounded in Book VII. “Mud,” to begin with, poses a slight problem, as it is plainly a description of what the Egyptians described as the “primeval waters” or “Nun.” There is not, however, a serious discrepancy here, as the “waters” in question, being viewed by the Egyptians as a sort of archetypal Nile, owed precisely their “nutritive and fertilizing” quality, emphasized by Iamblichus, to their pervasive muddiness. Out of Nun, at any rate, there arises Atum, “the Complete One,” who emerges initially as a sort of mud-bank out of this primeval Nile. In Utterance 600 of the *Pyramid Texts* we read the following:

O Atum! When you came into being you rose up as a high hill,  
You shone as the *Benben* Stone in the temple of the Phoenix in  
Heliopolis.

Again, in Utterance 587:

Hail to you, O Atum!  
Hail to you, O Becoming One who came into being of himself!  
You rose up in the your name of *high hill*,  
You came into being in this your name of *Becoming One*.

R. T. Rundle Clark, to whom we are indebted for most of the information relayed here, comments on these texts:<sup>89</sup>

There was no fixed form for the Primeval Hill. In the *Pyramid Text* just quoted it is engraved as a simple hill slope. Such an idea could be easily derived from the mounds which emerged each year from the waters as the Nile flood receded. Soon the muddy hillocks would sprout with weeds and begin to teem with insect and animal life. The earth itself would seem to be the source of myriads of new creatures. This, enlarged to cosmic dimensions, is the idea of Atum—the complete and all-containing one—the world-mound rising out of the primeval ocean, containing within it the promise of all that was to come.

ad loc.) that this *might* approximate to the total holdings of the temple library at Heliopolis, all anonymous texts being piously attributed to Thoth himself, but that seems a large number even for a complete ancient library. More probably it is simply arithmological mumbo-jumbo perpetrated by Manetho to impress the Hellenes.

<sup>89</sup> Rundle Clark (1959, 38).

This is Atum, then, in his initial stage. But Iamblichus speaks of this primal deity as rising from the flux of matter, and ascending into a transcendent state (VII.2.251). Does this correspond to anything in the Egyptian account of Atum?

Atum proceeds to the creation of other gods, initially Shu, a male deity, identified with air and light, and Tefnut, a female deity, originally representing moisture and mist, but later identified also with Ma'at, the World Order; and these in turn create other gods, who need not concern us in the present context. Atum himself, however, now rises above all this activity, and becomes, in the Memphite version of theology, the great god Ptah. Ptah is envisaged as presiding over all creation from the heavens, as a self-sufficient and eternal pure spirit. To quote Rundle Clark again:<sup>90</sup>

In the Heliopolitan myth the High God Atum was a human being, even if his sex was indeterminate. The Memphite theology rejects this crude anthropomorphism. Not only is god a spirit, but the fundamental principles of the world's organization seem to the author of this document to be ideas rather than persons: *in the form of Atum there came into being heart and there came into being tongue. But the supreme god is Ptah, who has endowed all the gods and their ka's through that heart of his which appeared in the form of Horus, and through that tongue of his which appeared in the form of Thoth, both of which were forms of Ptah.* This is, quite clearly, an attempt to impose Ptah over Atum, as the highest god. Atum has become a mere symbol for the aspect of God as the begetter of the first pair. All the actors in the primeval drama are aspects of Ptah, the supreme power.

We do not, fortunately, have to penetrate very far into the intricacies of Egyptian theology in the present context; it is enough to observe that there is evidence here of the concept of an original deity who arose from the primeval slime,<sup>91</sup> created a pair of secondary gods, and rose into the heavens to become transcendent and immaterial.

<sup>90</sup> Rundle Clark (1959, 61).

<sup>91</sup> The primeval waters are described as "slime" in chapter 175 of *The Book of the Dead*, where the original deity, Atum, portrayed as the primeval Serpent *Kematef*, is described as "that great surviving serpent, when all mankind has returned to the slime." There are doubtless many other examples.

To turn to the second symbol, the lotus: that is also, of course, a central symbol of Egyptian theology. It is in the Her-mopolite theological system that the lotus figures as a crucial symbol of creation. Again, we turn to Rundle Clark:<sup>92</sup>

In spite of the immense prestige of Atum and Ptah, there are traces of other ideas, even during the Old Kingdom (i.e. c. 2780–2500 B.C.). Of these one of the most interesting is the cosmic lotus. In this myth, the waters did not extend in all directions, but are to be imagined as a limitless dark sea. From the surface emerges an immense lotus bud. It is luminous even as it rises—as an early hieroglyph shows—but with the opening of the bud there emerges the light of the world and the sweet perfume of the morning air. This is the “redolent flower, the soul of Re,” worshipped at Memphis as Nefertum, “the lotus at the nostril of Re.” Strictly, the god is not the flower itself but “that great god who is within the lotus bud of gold.” Hence what rises from the opening flower is the world soul, which is the light, life and air and sun . . . The lotus is thus the symbol for the final defeat of the powers of the Abyss. In the pictorial symbolism the flower opens to reveal the head of the emerging soul, the Divine Child, or, in the case of Nefertum, two feathers.

The god usually depicted as seated upon the lotus was Horus, and more particularly Horus the Child, Harpocrates (*Hor-pa-khered*), with his finger in his mouth. But he was, none the less, a figure of the supreme god, more or less in the position of the Platonic demiurge, precisely as the transcendent ruler of the universe, and thus not directly involved in the “mud” of material creation. In describing him, “Abamon” employs a number of purely Platonic formulations, particularly *σεμνὸς καὶ ἅγιος*,<sup>93</sup> *ὑπερηπλωμένος καὶ μένων ἐν ἑαυτῷ*,<sup>94</sup> but that is to be expected, and they are by no means unsuitable to Horus as he is conceived of in Egyptian speculation.

Plutarch, too, is well acquainted with the symbolism of the lotus. In his essay *On the Oracles at Delphi* (400a) he presents the poet Sarapion (who is endowed with an Egyptian-sounding name, though resident in Athens) as making the following remark,

<sup>92</sup> Rundle Clark (1959, 66–67).

<sup>93</sup> This is from Plato, *Sophist* 249a.

<sup>94</sup> For analogues to this, cf. Plato, *Resp.* 2.381c; *Tim.* 42e.



in connection with the symbolism of a statue that the company is contemplating:

Sarapion remarked that the artisan had represented allegorically the nurture and birth and exhalation of the sun from moisture, whether he had read what Homer says (*Od.* 3.1): *up leaped the sun, leaving behind the beauteous waters*, or whether he had observed that the Egyptians, to show the beginning of sunrise, paint a very young baby sitting on a lotus flower.

Again, in the essay *On Isis and Osiris* (355c), Plutarch dismisses the idea that the Egyptians believe literally “that the sun rises as a new-born baby from the lotus, but they portray the rising of the sun in this manner to indicate allegorically the enkindling of the sun from the waters.”

Plutarch, then, like Iamblichus, takes it as obvious that deep philosophical insights underlie the symbols of Egyptian religion. The case is similar with the well-known image of the Boat of the Sun-God (whether Re or Osiris). Re in his royal barque, known as “The Boat of Millions of Years,” often accompanied by a multiplicity of other gods (such as the Ennead of Heliopolis), is a familiar figure on many an Egyptian tomb, and hardly needs further illustration here.<sup>95</sup> That Iamblichus is by no means the first to allegorize the Sun-Boat is shown, once again, by Plutarch, who tells us, at *On Isis and Osiris* 364c, that “they (sc. the Egyptians) say that the sun and moon do not use chariots, but boats in which to sail round in their courses; and by this they intimate that the nourishment and origin of these heavenly bodies is from moisture.” We may note here, however, that Plutarch, as in the case of the lotus, presents a “physical” allegory, concerned simply with the nourishment of the heavenly bodies from moisture, rather than a theological one, as does Iamblichus, who focuses rather on the *piloting* of the boat, as a symbol of the demiurgic governance of the cosmos.

Lastly, the Zodiac. Only here do we appear to have a problem. There is no evidence in our sources that the Egyptians

<sup>95</sup> In fact the Egyptians assigned *two* boats to Re, the *M'andjet*-boat for use in the day, and the *Mesketet*-boat for use in the night, and identified these with the two eyes of the sun-god, but Iamblichus would have no use for such subtleties.

had any concept of the Zodiac as such (though they did postulate a system of “decans,” each representing ten degrees of the circuit of the heavens, and thus a third of a zodiacal sign).<sup>96</sup> It seems rather to be of Babylonian provenance, though even that is somewhat obscure. It may actually be, in its fully developed form, a distinctively Greek concept, only adopted in the Hellenistic era by Babylonian astronomers. At any rate, at a later stage in history, someone (perhaps Manetho?) would seem to have taken the Zodiac into Egyptian astronomy, and this was accepted by later Egyptophiles. What Iamblichus may be reflecting here, in fact, is a late rationalization of the relation, in at least some theological texts going back as far as the Middle Kingdom,<sup>97</sup> of Amun-Re, or indeed Osiris, as supreme God, to a host of lesser deities, which are regarded as his manifestations, this being related to the later Platonist concept of particular gods—who are *his* manifestations—being assigned distinct regions of the earth by the Demiurge—and that in turn being given an astrological twist by association with signs of the Zodiac, which would have an effect on individual lives.

As regards the “meaningless names” (ἄσημα ὀνόματα) discussed in the latter two chapters of the book, these are well-known from the Greek magical papyri, which have a demotic Egyptian provenance, and native Egyptian magicians were just as free with these names, as indicated by their presence equally in the Demotic papyri and in the Greek—indeed, the evidence of the texts shows that the majority of the magicians were bilingual, and probably of purely Egyptian ancestry. “Abamon” shows, at various points in the work, that he is fully familiar with the milieu from which the magical papyri emanate, though he is frequently involved in criticizing the attitudes of “vulgar” magicians from the exalted perspective of the theurgist.<sup>98</sup> The use, then, of various

<sup>96</sup> See on this question Neugebauer (1957, index, s.v. “Zodiac”). The decans appear first on coffin lids of the Middle Kingdom (1970–1640 B.C.E.), but would seem to go back further than that. They are set in relation to a series of constellations, thirty-six in number, but these do not correspond to the later signs of the Zodiac.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. Rundle Clark (1959).

<sup>98</sup> In this connection, “Abamon’s” recognition in VII.4.256 of the sacredness of the “Assyrian” as well as of the Egyptian language, seems somewhat too broadminded for a senior Egyptian cleric (nor, of course, should “Abamon”

types of ἄσχημα ὀνόματα, whether garbled forms of ancient Egyptian names,<sup>99</sup> long strings of syllables, some palindromes, some not,<sup>100</sup> or simply sequences of vowels, is a basic feature of Greco-Egyptian magical practice. It does not seem to have figured, on the other hand, at the higher levels of Egyptian sacred literature—though we do find there a doctrine of the creative Word of Atum, as supreme god, which gives all entities, divine and human, their existence, as well as their names.<sup>101</sup> Iamblichus's position here seems influenced, as much as anything, by that expressed in Tractate XVI of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, where "Asclepius" warns King Ammon not to translate the present discourse (which is, of course, preserved in Greek, and was very probably composed in that language) into the language of the Greeks, since their language is devoid of sacred power.

Let us turn, finally, to the details of Egyptian theology given in chapter three of Book VIII, following on the very interesting account of first principles, which has been discussed under the heading of Iamblichus's metaphysics. In chapter three, "Abamon," "taking another tack" (κατ' ἄλλην δὲ τὰξιν), but still basing himself upon the books of Hermes, produces first a celestial deity, Emeph, who is described as "chief of the gods in heaven" (τῶν ἐπουρανίων θεῶν ἡγούμενος), and who is to be characterized as "an intellect thinking himself, and turning his thoughts towards himself." Now no deity with the name Emeph can be identified, so Scott very plausibly advocated emending this to Kmeph, who can be identified with the cosmic serpent *Km-atef*, a

refer to his own language as "barbarian"). Sacred words of "Assyrian," Hebrew and Aramaic provenance are in fact found quite extensively in the magical papyri.

<sup>99</sup> For example, "Archenthechtha" for the Egyptian god *Har-Khenty-Khet*; "Bainchôch" for *ba n kky*, "spirit of darkness;" "Harsamosi" for *Hrsmsw*, "Horus the First-born."

<sup>100</sup> For example, *ablanathanalba*, *akrammachamarei*, *sesengenbarpharanges*.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Rundle Clark, (1959, 63–64 and 79).

manifestation of Atum, in his capacity as the creator of multiplicity, the deity who assigns to everything its essence.<sup>102</sup> This may be accepted, we believe, as what Iamblichus intended.<sup>103</sup>

A much worse problem, however, attends the primary deity which “Abamon” ranks over Kmeph, and which he calls “Ikton,” and identifies with the “partless One” (τὸ ἐν ἀμερέζ), presumably the equivalent of the Neoplatonic One, or possibly, in Iamblichus’s particular metaphysical scheme, the lowest element of the henadic realm, which is also the presiding monad of the intelligible realm, the ἐν ὄν, or “One-Being.” There is, however, no senior deity in the Egyptian pantheon with a name even faintly resembling Ikton. In the notes ad loc., we have made a tentative suggestion of the figure of Irta, who is presented, in the theological scheme of Egyptian Thebes, as the son of Kmeph, and producer of the Ogdoad of lower gods—but this would involve a degree of confusion on Iamblichus’s part.

Another intriguing possibility presents itself, however. Following on the description of Ikton as τὸ ἐν ἀμερέζ, we find in the manuscripts the phrase ὃ φησι πρῶτον μάγευμα. This would have to mean “which he (sc. Hermes) calls *first spell*, or *magical procedure*”—which, while not completely meaningless, makes very little sense. Thomas Gale proposed emending μάγευμα to μάλειμμα, “bringing to birth” (with which μάγευμα would in fact have been pronounced more or less identically in Iamblichus’s day, as in modern Greek), and this is accepted by Des Places. Now this in turn might not seem to make much sense, but it actually fits rather well the case of a deity called *Ihy*, the first-born of the goddess Hathor, who represents the face of the sky, usually portrayed as a celestial cow. Ihy himself is the Sun, conceived of as a child emerging from his mother every day at dawn, which would give point to the title μάλειμμα.<sup>104</sup> It is possible that some exegete of Egyptian wisdom such as Manetho picked on Ihy as a candidate

<sup>102</sup> Cf. Rundle Clark (1959, 50–52).

<sup>103</sup> Kmeph also occurs in the Magical papyri, e.g. *PGM* III. 142; IV. 1705, 2094, identified further with Osiris, and with the Agathos Daimon, or “Good Spirit.”

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Rundle Clark (1959, 85–86), who gives the text of a hymn in honour of Ihy, in which he is presented both as a child coming forth from the womb of Hathor, and as a supreme deity.

for the position of supreme God, but one would still have to explain the latter part of the Iamblichan title, *-kton*. Ihy, therefore, remains something of a long shot.

What follows, on the other hand, is thoroughly in accord with known Egyptian doctrine. The demiurgic intellect, already identified with Kmeph, or *Kem-atef*, is now declared to be manifested as Amun-Re, Ptah, or Osiris, according to the aspect of his power that is being emphasized. Of course, the situation is more complicated than this, since the priesthoods of the various rival centres, Heliopolis, Thebes, Memphis and so on, were all liable to promote their favourite god over all others, but broadly there is a recognition of the equivalence of these deities. A passage of the Memphite Theology, for example, runs as follows:<sup>105</sup>

In the form of Atum there came into being heart and there came into being tongue. But the supreme god is Ptah, who has endowed all the gods, and their *ka*'s, through that heart of his which appeared in the form of Horus and through that tongue of his which appeared in the form of Thoth, both of which were forms of Ptah.

This does not yet bring Osiris into the picture (though it does bring in Horus), but it is not difficult to see how he could be included. Originally, it must be said, Osiris was a "younger" god, belonging to the fourth generation, after Atum, then Shu and Tefnut, and then Geb (the Earth) and Nut (the Sky), whose son he was; but following on the end of the Old Kingdom (c. 2000 B.C.E.), there began a tendency to "universalize" Osiris, a process which reaches its full flowering in the New Kingdom period (c. 1540–1075 B.C.E.), where he becomes the counterpart of the celestial god Amun-Re. Osiris is essentially a chthonic deity, but he is also responsible for fertility, in particular the fertility resulting from the Nile Flood, and as such "Abamon's" epithet "productive of goods" (ἀγαθῶν δὲ ποιητικός) is entirely suitable to him.

Following on this, "Abamon" makes mention of a group of eight gods, four male and four female, which exercise rule over "the elements in the realm of generation, and the powers resident in them." This would seem to refer to the Ogdoad of Hermopolis,

<sup>105</sup> Quoted by Rundle Clark (1959, 61).

a group of eight primordial gods worshipped in that city.<sup>106</sup> Originally, these gods were rather the source of all higher and more articulated deities than dependent on them, but in later times they came to be seen as subordinate to Thoth, or to Amun-Re. As regards the Moon, Thoth, once again, is the deity most generally associated with it, but there are also connections recorded with Osiris, Shu and Khonsu. There was actually a Khonsu Cosmogony emanating from Thebes,<sup>107</sup> in which Khonsu, normally the moon-god, is identified with Ptah, and made to preside over the Ogdoad. It may indeed be Khonsu that “Abamon” has in mind here.

Below these gods, we come to the so-called “decans,”<sup>108</sup> the thirty-six sections, covering ten degrees each, into which the circuit of the heaven is divided in Egyptian astronomy/astrology. There are divinities presiding over each of these,<sup>109</sup> but Abamon refers only to a deity who presides over all of them together, and that is probably Osiris.

The remainder of Book VIII constitutes a rebuttal of Porphyry’s allegation that Egyptian religion involves rigid subordination to the inexorable rule of Fate (VIII.6). This is more explicitly based on the Hermetic writings than is the account of Egyptian theology, and so rather less relevant to our present theme, but we may note, in the surviving corpus, a doctrinal position close to that of Iamblichus here set out, for instance, in *Corp. herm.* 16, a discourse of Asclepius to King Ammon, where it is specified (in

<sup>106</sup> Names usually given as: Amun and Amaunet, representing “hiddenness;” Huh and Hauhet, representing “formlessness;” Kuk and Kauket, “darkness,” and Nun and Naunet, “the watery abyss.” Cf. Lesko in Shafer (1991, 94–95).

<sup>107</sup> Cf. Lesko in Shafer (1991, 105–6).

<sup>108</sup> We should note that, before turning to the decans, “Abamon” speaks of divisions of the cosmos into two, four, and twelve, and after them, a division into “twice that” (i.e. seventy-two). It is not clear to what these refer, but one could conjecture Night and Day, the four seasons, the twelve months—and perhaps some system of “half-decans,” presiding over five-day “weeks.”

<sup>109</sup> Sirius, the Dog-Star (e.g. *Sopdet*), and Orion (e.g. *Sah*) were the dominant constellations in relation to the decans, and both were worshipped as gods, Sirius because its rising coincided with the annual inundation, while the rising of Orion in the southern sky signaled the beginning of the new season of growth.

chapter 15) that the higher, rational soul rises above cosmic influences, all other aspects of man being subject to the rule of astral gods and daemons.

## 5. THE NATURE AND CONTENTS OF THE *DE MYSTERIIS*

If we ask ourselves to what genre of literature the *De mysteriis* belongs, the answer must be—as indeed is indicated by the true title of the work<sup>110</sup>—to that of “Problems and Solutions” (*aporiai kai lyseis*, or *zêtēmata*). Cast though it is in epistolary form, it is essentially a series of replies to a set of *aporiai* proposed by Porphyry, about the nature of the gods, or of the divine realm in general, and the proper mode of our worship of them. Such a literary genre is by no means unexampled in later Platonism: Porphyry himself had composed both *Questions on Homer* (*Homerika zêtēmata*), and a *Collection of Questions on Rhetoric* (*Synagôgê tôn rhêtorikôn zêtēmatôn*), as well as a book of *Miscellaneous Questions* (*Symmikta zêtēmata*), many of which concern philosophical topics; and, much later, the last head of the Academy, Damascius, composed a work of *Problems and Solutions* (*aporiai kai lyseis*) on *First Principles*. The genre stretches back to the early Hellenistic period and beyond, so there is nothing very unusual in Iamblichus’s adoption of it here.

The present division of the work into books dates only from the Renaissance. It was in fact Scutellius, the second translator of the work into Latin in 1556 (after Ficino’s version of 1497), who is responsible for this (along with the acceptance of Ficino’s rather tendentious new title, *De mysteriis Aegyptiorum, Chaldaeorum, Assyriorum*), and this arrangement was adopted by Thomas Gale in his *editio princeps* of 1678. The division into ten ‘books’ (of very unequal length), while not seriously misleading (as being based largely on natural breaks in Iamblichus’s exposition), does, however, somewhat obscure the original structure of Iamblichus’s work.

<sup>110</sup> That is to say, *The Reply of the Master Abamon to the Letter of Porphyry to Anebo, and the Solutions to the Questions it Contains*. This, it must be said, was pointed out first in modern times by Johannes Geffcken (1920, 67). The matter has been discussed illuminatingly by H. D. Saffrey in a number of articles (1973, 1992, and 1993).

Iamblichus's methodology is outlined at I.1.3–4 (cf. I.5.15.1–2), where he states that he will answer Porphyry appropriately with reference to each of the three categories of theology, philosophy and theurgy. Theological issues are apparently discernible even to Porphyry and hence, according to Iamblichus, require less examination (I.1.4.1–4); philosophical issues, which contain inherent contradictions, must be examined accordingly (I.1.4.5–7); but questions which require a theurgic answer necessitate an exposition of all the appropriate rites (I.1.4.7–9). Iamblichus warns that his discussion will therefore be lengthy and eclectic (I.1.4.10–12; cf. IV.1.180 and V.5.205–206), and cites the various authorities to which he will turn for doctrine (I.1.4–5).<sup>111</sup> The wisdom of the Chaldaean sages can be gleaned from infinite ancient writings (I.2.5); the theories of the philosophers “according to the ancient stelae of Hermes,” which were handed down from the Egyptians and known to Plato and Pythagoras, are another good source (I.1.2–3; I.2.5–6; VII.2.250; VIII.1; VIII.4.266). In truth, Iamblichus's references to the *Chaldaean Oracles* and the notions preserved in the *Corpus Hermeticum* are largely sweeping and general, but their influence on him is undeniable, and an awareness of their contents essential for a full understanding of the *De mysteriis*. Finally, Iamblichus mentions that some people rely on silly arguments or common assumptions (I.1.5), but is confident that he will demonstrate the absurdity of all such false ideas or generally-held misconceptions as Porphyry may care to raise (I.2.6; cf. II.11.96; III.13.129–130; III.22.153; IV.5.187; V.13.216; X.2.286).

We should remember that Iamblichus felt that his task of producing a written defence of theurgy was inherently impossible.<sup>112</sup> While he agrees to expound this divine process as far as is possible (I.2.6–7), it becomes ever clearer during the course of the *De mysteriis* exactly how uncomfortable he is with the medium of intellectual discourse when it comes to the miraculous. He concentrates on highlighting the signs (σημεία) by which Porphyry will be able to recognise true theurgy when he sees it, and argues that the only way Porphyry will gain the understanding which he

<sup>111</sup> Cf. Proclus at *Theol. plat.* 1.4.20.1–25, who claims Plato as his model of eclecticism.

<sup>112</sup> According to Plato's Seventh Letter (341c), the truth about the highest things does not admit of verbal expression and hence writing is best avoided.



seeks is by participating in the divine rites—philosophical speculation is futile. Throughout the work, he thus urges Porphyry to replace verbal discourse and learning with a superior kind of γνῶσις, that which comes with the experience of revelation. The contents of the work are as follows:

I. “Abamon” makes a general appeal to Aegypto-Chaldaean wisdom (I.1–2), before making some attempt to define the various entities in the late Neoplatonic hierarchy. He starts by placing the soul in the context of this divine hierarchy (I.3), but soon reminds us that the Good and the soul are extremes, hence the need for intermediaries (I.5–7). The first *quaestio* is dealt with from I.4 to II.2: what is the correct manner of classifying divine beings? First, the definitive properties of beings are overviewed (I.4), and there is a rejection of various false methods of differentiation between them (I.8–10); the gods, even celestial ones, are defined as superior to the intermediaries in their relationship with matter (I.16–17; 19–20) and are immune to all passions and disorder (I.12–14; 21); they are also exempt from the responsibilities of evil (I.18); the differences between the gods and the beings below them means that prayer must be investigated as a means of communication (I.15), and true theurgy is initially described (I.11).

II. A detailed account of the various divine epiphanies offers us a more tangible means of differentiating between the divine orders via their appearance, and this “Abamon” provides for us in Book II. Beginning at II.3, he discusses the epiphanies within various categories of assessment: their simplicity or variety (II.3.70.7–71.7); their changeability (II.3.71.7–72.9) and stability or disorder (II.3.72.10–73.4); their movement, (II.4.79.1–5), speed (II.4.74.9–75.7), dimension (II.4.75.8–76.10), clarity (II.4.76.11–77.7), subtlety (II.8.86.4–87.10), beauty (II.3.73.5–74.8), luminosity (II.4.77.8–14) and fulguration (II.4.77.15–78.13). Iamblichus also points out that the epiphanies are all accompanied by various other visible escorts (II.7.83.9–84.14) which reveal their allotments (II.7.85.1–86.3). He assesses their emotive effects (II.3.71.7–15) and their powers of purification (II.5.79.6–12), adding that this comes ultimately from the gods (II.5.79.13–80.3) and is proven through the consumption of matter by the epiphanies (II.5.80.12–81.9); he remarks on the benefits bestowed

by the epiphanies (II.6.81.10–83.8) and their effects on the dispositions and the natures of the spectators (II.9.87.11–90.5).<sup>113</sup>

III. In this lengthy book, “Abamon” addresses Porphyry’s third major question, “What happens in predicting the future?” To do this, he focuses on the details of mantic ritual, most especially on divine inspiration in its various forms. He examines divination in sleep (III.2–3), *θεοφορία*, possession and its signs (III.4–7), oracular inspiration (III.11) and the bringing of light (*φωταγωγή*) (III.14). Dubious forms of ritual are exposed as false friends, among these the process of standing on magical characters (III.13) and divination via instinct or the analysis of natural events (III.15–16; 26–27); the supposed therapeutic effects of music are contrasted with the truly divine effects of the Korybantic rites (III.9–10), as is mere hysteria with divine ecstasy (III.25). False apparitions are the result of bad practice (III.28–29) rather than genuine theurgy, which occurs only as a result of divine condescension (III.17–24). Daemonic activity is always dangerous, but tends to be triggered by evil human practices leading to evil daemonic inspiration (III.30–31).

IV. The fourth book addresses some thorny questions on the less pleasant side of life, such as how one might explain the origins of evil, especially given the notion of universal sympathy (IV.6–7; 10–13). “Abamon” makes good use of some well-trodden philosophical paths, highlighting the differences between human justice and divine justice (IV.5), and arguing for the precedence of the Universal over the Particular (IV.8–9). He also tackles the question of how men may command the gods during theurgic ritual (IV.1–4).

V. Sacrifice is examined in Book V, and “Abamon” centres his discussion around two crucial queries: how sacrifice works and, within this, why there are so many seeming contradictions within the process itself (V.1). How, for instance, can it be that sacrificial fumes are of benefit to the immaterial gods (V.1–4; V.10–V.12)? He tackles what he sees as the common misconceptions about sacrifice (V.5–8) before elaborating his own radical explanations on true theurgic sacrifice (V.9–10; V.14–V.23.232.9). At V.23–V.25 he offers two further comments and

<sup>113</sup> These twenty categories are highlighted by Saffrey (1973, 281–95).

a conclusion on the process of sacrifice, and at V.26 we find a digression on prayer.

VI. Book VI examines further some sticky questions raised by Porphyry about the process and effects of sacrifice, namely the contradiction in ancient thought about death as a pollutant and sacrifice as a process of purification, plus the issue of how evil daemonic spirits may be lured by sacrificial fumes. “Abamon” answers with reference to the difference between human and animal souls and the vessels which they vacate on death (VI.1–2), and to the more slippery notion that sacrifice is about the power of life rather than death (VI.3–4). He declares that the possible response of evil daemonic spirits to sacrifice is an entirely separate matter from the responses of the gods (VI.5–7).

VII. Book VII looks at Egyptian symbolism, offering an allegorical interpretation of three popular symbols (VII.1–2), some comments on the zodiac (VII.3) and on the sacred barbarian names (VII.4–5).

VIII. A brief Iamblichean take on the key points of “Egyptian” theology, looking at the Primary Cause, the One, the divine Father of the First Intelligibles and the gods (VIII.1–3), then Hermetic astrology and fatality (VIII.4–8).

IX. Some remarks on the personal daemon which, “Abamon” warns, is another issue which must be examined theurgically and not intellectually (IX.1–2). The personal daemon is what ties us to fate (IX.3–7). It is unique to each of us (IX.8–9) and assigned by the gods (IX.10).

X. In conclusion, “Abamon” emphasises, against Porphyry’s implications, that the only true good is union with the gods (X.1) and the only route to this is theurgy (X.2–3); only the mantic process can, eventually, free us from the bonds of fate (X.4–6). He ends with a prayer and exhortation (X.8).

Iamblichus, *De mysteriis*  
Text and Translation

# <Περὶ τῶν αἰγυπτίων μυστηρίων>

Ἰστέον ὅτι ὁ φιλόσοφος Πρόκλος, ὑπομνηματίζων τὰς τοῦ μεγάλου Πλωτίνου Ἐννεάδας, λέγει ὅτι ὁ ἀντιγράφων πρὸς τὴν προκειμένην τοῦ Πορφυρίου ἐπιστολὴν ὁ θεσπέσιός ἐστιν Ἰάμβλιχος, καὶ διὰ τὸ τῆς ὑποθέσεως οἰκεῖον καὶ ἀκόλουθον ὑποκρίνεται πρόσωπον Αἰγυπτίου τινὸς Ἀβάμμωνος· ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ τῆς λέξεως κομματικὸν καὶ ἀφοριστικὸν καὶ τὸ τῶν ἐννοιῶν πραγματικὸν καὶ γλαφυρὸν καὶ ἔνθουν μαρτυρεῖ τὸν Πρόκλον καλῶς καὶ κρίναντα καὶ ιστορήσαντα.

[1] | Ἀβάμμωνος διδασκάλου πρὸς τὴν Πορφύριον πρὸς Ἀνεβῶ ἐπιστολὴν ἀποκρίσις καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ ἀπορημάτων λύσεις.

1 Titulus recens; verus titulus adest, I.1-2. (Scholion praeivium) N. B. — Paginae (aegyptiacis typis indicatae) sunt Parthey, lineae autem nostrae intra paginam quamque partheianam. E silentio concludendum est textum nostrum cum lectione V et M convenire. || 1-7 Praeambulum hic habet V, i. m. inf. M || 1 ὁ M: om. V || 5 Ἀβάμμωνος ] Ἀβάμωνος VM | κομματικὸν M: συμματικὸν V σημαντικὸν cj. F (probante Sicherl) μαντικὸν cj. Bidez || [1].1 Ἀβάμμωνος ] Ἀβάμωνος VM

# <ON THE MYSTERIES OF EGYPT>

The Reply of the Master Abamon to the Letter of Porphyry to Anebo, and the Solutions to the Questions it Contains<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Des Places begins his edition of the text with a prefatory note from Michael Psellus that reads as follows: “It should be noted that the philosopher Proclus, in the course of his commentary on the *Enneads* of the great Plotinus, says that the author of the response to the letter of Porphyry here set out is actually the divinely-inspired Iamblichus, and that it is by reason of suitability to the subject-matter that he adopts the persona of an Egyptian, Abamon. But in fact both the conciseness and pithiness of the style and the precision and inspired quality of the concepts testify to the fact that Proclus’s judgement and information was excellent.” This appellation is found at the head of Psellus’s eleventh-century MS, and the scholion heads both V and M. For more detail, see our “Introduction,” and Thillet (1968, 173).

## I

- 1 Θεὸς ὁ τῶν λόγων ἡγεμὼν, Ἑρμῆς, πάλαι δέδοκται καλῶς ἄπ-  
 ασι τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν εἶναι κοινός· ὁ δὲ τῆς περὶ θεῶν ἀληθινῆς ἐπιστήμης  
 [2] προεστηκώς εἷς ἐστὶν ὁ αὐτός | ἐν ὅλοις· ᾧ δὴ καὶ οἱ ἡμέτεροι πρόγονοι 1  
 τὰ αὐτῶν τῆς σοφίας εὐρήματα ἀνετίθεσαν, Ἑρμοῦ πάντα τὰ οἰκεῖα συγ-  
 γράμματα ἐπονομάζοντες. Εἰ δὲ τοῦδε τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἡμεῖς τὸ ἐπιβάλλον  
 καὶ δυνατὸν ἑαυτοῖς μέρος μετέχομεν, σὺ τε καλῶς ποιεῖς ἃ εἰς γνῶσιν  
 τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν, ὡς φιλοῦσι, περὶ θεολογίας προτείνων ἐρωτήματα, ἐγὼ τε 5  
 εἰκότως τὴν πρὸς Ἀνεβῶ τὸν ἐμὸν μαθητὴν πεμφθεῖσαν ἐπιστολὴν ἑμαν-  
 τῶ γεγράφθαι νομίσας ἀποκρινοῦμαι σοι αὐτὰ τάληθ' ὑπὲρ ὧν πυνθάνη.  
 Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν εἴη πρότερον Πυθαγόραν μὲν καὶ Πλάτωνα καὶ Δημόκριτον  
 [3] καὶ Εὐδοξον καὶ πολλοὺς ἄλλους τῶν παλαιῶν Ἑλλήνων | τετυχηκέναι 1  
 διδαχῆς τῆς προσηκούσης ὑπὸ τῶν καθ' ἑαυτοὺς γιγνομένων ἱερογραμμά-  
 των, σὲ δ' ἔφ' ἡμῶν ὄντα καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν ἐκείνοις ἔχοντα γνώμην διαμαρτεῖν  
 τῆς ὑπὸ τῶν νῦν ζώντων καὶ καλουμένων κοινῶν διδασκάλων ὑψηγῆσεως.

[2].3 δὲ V: om. M || 4 μετέχομεν V: μετᾱσχοιμεν M | 5 V (dein lac. 4 ll.): ἄτινα i. m. V<sup>2</sup> om. M | εἰς γνῶσιν V: ἀγνώως ἀγνώσι M || 5 ὡς φιλοῦσι V: ὡς φίλοις cj. (ut vid.) Taylor Wilder ὡς εἰδόσι cj. Sicherl om. M (lac. 9 ll.) | post προτείνων lac. 6 ll. in V || 6 πεμφθεῖσαν M: τιμῶν V (dein lac. 4 ll.) || 7 νομίσας M: ὁμολογῶν V νομίζων cj. Sicherl || 8 ἂν εἴη V: εἰεν M || 9 καὶ<sup>1</sup> V: τε καὶ M || [3].2-3 ἱερογραμμάτων VM: ἱερογραμματατέων cj. i. m. B<sup>5</sup> || 3 post σὲ δ' lac. 5 ll. in V || 4 τῆς M: τῶν V

## BOOK I

1 Hermes, the god who presides over rational discourse, has long been considered, quite rightly, to be the common patron of all priests; he who presides over true knowledge about the gods is one and the same always and everywhere. It is to him that our ancestors in particular dedicated the fruits of their wisdom, attributing all their own writings to Hermes.<sup>2</sup> And if we, for our part, receive from this god our due share of favour, such as we are capable of receiving, you, for your part, do well in laying before the priests questions about theology, such as they love to deal with,<sup>3</sup> and which pertain to their expertise;<sup>4</sup> and, at the same time, assuming that the letter sent to my student Anebo may be addressed equally well to me, it is reasonable for me to grant you a true reply to your enquiries. For it would not be right for Pythagoras and Plato and Democritus and Eudoxus and many other of the Hellenes of old<sup>5</sup> to have been granted suitable instruction by the scribes of their time,<sup>6</sup> but for you, in our time, who have the same purpose as they, to fail of guidance at the hands of those who are accounted public teachers now. So, in view of

<sup>2</sup> The exact identity of Hermes named here is deliberately ambiguous. “Abamon” exploits the supposed attributes of both the Greek Hermes and the (semi)-divine Hermes Trismegistus, a late-antique amalgam of Thoth and Hermes. Thoth was supposedly the divine scribe of ritual texts and formulae, the inventor of writing, guardian of wisdom, knowledge and science. The Greek Hermes’s defining characteristic in the Hellenistic period was as the interpreter of divine will to humanity, and to the Stoics he symbolised the creative λόγος. See Fowden (1986, 22–24, 201–2) and our “Introduction.”

<sup>3</sup> Or, accepting Sicherl’s (1957) conjecture ὥς εἰδῶσι for ὥς φιλοῦσι, “as being the experts.”

<sup>4</sup> If that is the meaning of the rather troublesome phrase εἰς γνῶσιν.

<sup>5</sup> There are traditions connected with all of these great men visiting Egypt. For Pythagoras, cf. Herodotus 2.81; Isocrates, *Bus.* 28; Diodorus Siculus 1.69.4; 92.2; 98.2 (from Hecataeus of Abdera); for Plato, Cicero, *Fin.* 5.29.87; *Resp.* 1.10.16; Diodorus Siculus 1.96.2; for Democritus and Eudoxus, *ibid.*, and for Democritus, Diogenes Laertius 9.35. Proclus (*Theol. plat.* 1.5.25–26) claims that Plato received perfect knowledge concerning the gods from Pythagorean and Orphic doctrines.

<sup>6</sup> Reading *ἱερογραμματέων* for the *ἱερογραμματῶν* of the MSS.



Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν οὕτως ἐπὶ τὸν λόγον τὸν παρόντα πρόσειμι, σὺ δ', εἰ μὲν 5  
 βούλει, τὸν αὐτὸν ἡγοῦ σοι πάλιν ἀντιγράφειν ὥπερ ἐπέστειλας· εἰ δὲ καὶ  
 φαίνεται σοι δεῖν, ἐμὲ θεὸς εἰναί σοι τὸν ἐν γράμμασι διαλεγόμενον ἢ τινα  
 ἄλλον προφήτην Αἰγυπτίων· οὐδὲ γὰρ τοῦτο διενήνοχεν· ἢ ἔτι βέλτιον,  
 οἶμαι, τὸν μὲν λέγοντα ἄφες, εἴτε χείρων εἴτε ἀμείνων εἴη, τὰ δὲ λεγόμενα 10  
 σκόπει εἴτε ἀληθῆ εἴτε καὶ ψευδῆ λέγεται, προθύμως ἀνεγείρας τὴν  
 διάνοιαν.

[4] Ἐν ἀρχῇ δὴ διελώμεθα τὰ γένη πόσα τέ ἐστὶ καὶ | ὅποια τῶν νυνὶ 1  
 προκειμένων προβλημάτων· ἀπὸ τίνων τε εἴληπται θεῶν θεολογιῶν τὰ  
 ἀπορήματα διέλθωμεν, καὶ κατὰ ποίας τινὰς ἐπιστήμας ἐπιζητεῖται τὴν  
 πρόθεσιν αὐτῶν ποιησώμεθα.

Τὰ μὲν οὖν ἐπιποθεῖ διάκρισιν τινα τῶν κακῶς συγκεχυμένων, τὰ 5  
 δ' ἐστὶ περὶ τὴν αἰτίαν δι' ἣν ἕκαστά ἐστὶ τε οὕτως καὶ νοεῖται, τὰ δ' ἐπ'  
 ἄμφω τὴν γνώμην ἔλκει κατ' ἐναντίωσιν τινα προβαλλόμενα· ἔνια δὲ καὶ  
 τὴν ὅλην ἀπαιτεῖ παρ' ἡμῶν μυσταγωγίαν· τοιαῦτα δὲ ὄντα πολλαχόθεν  
 εἴληπται καὶ ἀπὸ διαφερουσῶν ἐπιστημῶν.

Τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἀφ' ὧν οἱ Χαλδαίων σοφοὶ παραδεδώκασιν τὰς ἐπιστά- 10  
 σεις προσάγει· τὰ δ' ἀφ' ὧν Αἰγυπτίων οἱ προφῆται διδάσκουσι ποιεῖται  
 τὰς ἀντιλήψεις, ἔνια δὲ καὶ τῆς τῶν φιλοσόφων θεωρίας ἐχόμενα τὰς ἐρω-  
 τήσεις | ἐπομένως αὐτοῖς ποιεῖται. Ἦδη δέ τινα καὶ ἀπ' ἄλλων οὐκ ἀξίων 1  
 λόγου δοξασμάτων ἐφέλκεται τινα ἀπρεπῆ διαμφισβήτησιν, τὰ δ' ἀπὸ τῶν  
 κοινῶν ὑπολήψεων παρ' ἀνθρώποις ὥρμηται· αὐτὰ τε οὖν καθ' ἑαυτὰ ἕκα-  
 στα ποικίλως διάκειται καὶ πρὸς ἄλληλα πολυειδῶς συνήρμωσται, ὅθεν δὴ

[3].6 βούλει M: προσδέη V | σοι M (dein lac. 5 ll.): om. V (lac. 9 ll.)  
 || 7-8 ἢ τινα ἄλλον M: οἶόν τινα V (dein lac. 7 ll.) || 8 οὐδὲ ] οὐδὲν cj. Scott  
 || 8-9 βέλτιον οἶμαι cj. i. m. B<sup>4</sup>: βέλτιον οἶ V (dein lac. 7 ll.) om. M (lac. 13 ll.)  
 || 10 σκόπει V: περισκόπει M | καὶ V: om. M || [4].1 post νυνὶ lac. 7 litt.  
 in V: ἡμῶν cj. Sicherl om. M || 2 θεολογιῶν V (dein lac. 2 ll.): om. M (lac. 8  
 ll.) ἐπιστημῶν cj. Sicherl del. («θείων... substantive accipiendum») i. m. B<sup>5</sup> ||  
 3 post τὴν lac. 3 ll. in V. || 6 οὕτως M: οὕτω δὴ V || 7 προβαλλόμενα (o  
 et v s. v.) M<sup>2</sup>: προβαλλώμεθα VM

this, I am presenting myself to take up the discussion; and you, for your part, if you will, imagine that the same person is now replying to you as he to whom you wrote; or, if it seems better to you, posit that it is I who discourses with you in writing, or any other prophet of the Egyptians—for it makes no difference. Or better still, I think, dismiss from your mind the speaker, whether he be better or worse,<sup>7</sup> and consider what is said, whether it be true or false, rousing up your intellect to the task with a will.

At the outset, perhaps we should identify the number and types of problem set before us. We should also examine from what theological perspectives the questions are being raised, and demonstrate what are the branches of knowledge according to which they are being pursued.

Some questions, then, call for the clarification of issues which have been wrongly confused, while others concern the reason why various things are the way they are, and are thought of in such a way; others, again, draw one's attention in both directions at once, since they contain an inherent contradiction; and still others call for an exposition of our whole mystical system.<sup>8</sup> This being the case, they are taken from many perspectives, and from very various branches of knowledge.

Some, in fact, require us to address them on the basis of the traditions of the sages of Chaldaea; others will derive their solution from the teachings of the prophets of Egypt; and others again, which relate to the speculations of the philosophers, need to be answered on that basis.<sup>9</sup> There are also some that, deriving from other opinions not worthy of note, involve one in unseemly controversy, while others are drawn from the common conceptions of men.<sup>10</sup> Each of these problems, then, appear in complex aspects, and are variously related to one another, and for all these

<sup>7</sup> For this as a dramatic device in oratory, cf. Demosthenes 59.115.

<sup>8</sup> That is to say, the system of theurgy.

<sup>9</sup> The "sages of Chaldaea" here is a reference, of course, to the *Chaldaean Oracles*, while "the prophets of Egypt" will be substantially the Hermetic Corpus. As for (Hellenic) philosophy, we shall see on many occasions "Abamon" exhibiting a good knowledge both of Platonism and of the teaching of other schools.

<sup>10</sup> The identity of οὐκ ἀξίων λόγου δοξασμάτων is not clear, but could be a reference to the beliefs of vulgar magic; the same might be true of the "common conceptions" (κοινὰ ἐννόμια) mentioned next at I.2.6.5 (cf. I.5.5.3). Cf. below n. 16.

διὰ πάντα ταῦτα λόγον τινός ἐστιν ἐπιδεῇ τοῦ κατευθύνοντος αὐτὰ προσ- 5  
ηκόντως.

2 Ἡμεῖς οὖν τὰ μὲν Ἀσσυρίων πάτρια δόγματα παραδώσομεν  
σοι μετ' ἀληθείας τὴν γνώμην, τὰ δὲ ἡμέτερά σοι σαφῶς ἀποκαλύψομεν,  
τὰ μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀρχαίων ἀπειρῶν γραμμάτων ἀναλογιζόμενοι τῇ γνώσει,  
τὰ δ' ἀφ' ὧν ὕστερον εἰς πεπερασμένον βιβλίον συνήγαγον οἱ παλαιοὶ τὴν 10  
ὄλην περὶ τῶν θείων εἶδησιν.

[6] Φιλόσοφον δ' εἴ τι προβάλλεις ἐρώτημα, διακρινουμέν σοι καὶ τοῦτο 1  
κατὰ τὰς Ἑρμοῦ παλαιὰς στήλας, | ἃς Πλάτων ἤδη πρόσθεν καὶ Πυθα- 1  
γόρας διαναγρόντες φιλοσοφίαν συνεστήσαντο, τὰ δ' ἀλλόφυλα ζητήματα  
ἢ ἀντιλογικὰ καὶ δυσεριστίαν τινὰ ἐμφαίνοντα πρῶως καὶ ἐμμελῶς παρα-  
μυθούμενοι ἢ τὴν ἀτοπίαν αὐτῶν ἀποδείξομεν· καὶ ὅσα προχωρεῖ κατὰ  
τὰς κοινὰς ἐννοίας γνωρίμως πάννυ καὶ σαφῶς πειρασόμεθα διαλέγεσθαι. 5

[5].5 διὰ secl. cj. Scott | κατευθύνοντος ] κατευθυνοῦντος cj. Scott ||  
7 τὰ ] περὶ τὰ cj. Gale || 10 ὕστερον M et (on s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: ὕστερα V | βιβλίον  
(o s. v.) M<sup>2</sup>: βιβλίων VM || 11 περὶ (ε et ἰ s. v.) M: παρὰ VM || [6].1 ἤδη  
πρόσθεν V: ἤδη πάλαι cj. Sicherl om. M (lac. 7 ll.) || 2 τὰ δ' ἀλλόφυλα V: τὰ  
δ' ἀλλότρια cj. Sicherl om. M (lac. 9 ll.) || 3 post ἀντιλογικὰ lac. 2 ll. in V:  
τε Sicherl om. M || 4 ἢ secl. cj. Scott | καὶ M: om. V | προχωρεῖ V:  
προχωροῦσι M || 5 καὶ σαφῶς M: om. V (lac. 10 ll.) | διαλέγεσθαι M: δια...  
V (lac. 5 ll.)

reasons demand a mode of exposition which will organise them suitably.

2 We therefore propose both to transmit to you truthfully our opinion <concerning><sup>11</sup> the ancestral doctrines of the Assyrians,<sup>12</sup> and to reveal our own views clearly to you, drawing by reasoning some from the innumerable writings of antiquity, and others from the limited corpus<sup>13</sup> in which the ancients later gathered the totality of their knowledge of things divine.

Yet if you put forward a philosophical question, we will settle this also for you by recourse to the ancient stelae of Hermes, to which Plato before us, and Pythagoras too, gave careful study in the establishment of their philosophy,<sup>14</sup> while problems derived from alien<sup>15</sup> sources or of a self-contradictory and contentious inspiration we will solve gently and harmoniously—or else we will make clear their absurdity. Such, again, as proceed from common conceptions<sup>16</sup> we will try to discuss with both understanding

<sup>11</sup> Reading *περί* before *τά* with Gale. An alternative, however, would be to excise *τὴν γνώμην*, and cut “our opinion concerning.”

<sup>12</sup> That is, the Chaldaeans: Cremer (1969, 8 n. 8, 9–10) points out that these terms are synonymous in the *De mysteriis*. See Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.181–185 on the “Chaldaeans” of Babylonia, and for “Chaldaean” as synonymous with “astrologer,” see Aristotle, *frg.* 35.

<sup>13</sup> This *πεπερασμένον βιβλίον* may be a reference to something like our present Hermetic Corpus, as opposed to the fabled 20,000 or 36,525 books of Hermes, of which he makes mention in VIII.1. Confusingly, however, “Abamon” is supposedly still discussing the Chaldaeans at this point.

<sup>14</sup> Reference is made to *στήλαι* by Proclus at *Comm. Tim.* 1.102.20–22, where he comments on the remark of the Egyptian priest at Plato, *Tim.* 22b: “O Solon, Solon, you Hellenes remain always children!” but without the explicit assertion that Plato or Pythagoras studied them. On the other hand, in Porphyry’s *Life of Pythagoras* 7–8, we have quite an elaborate tale of Pythagoras’s Egyptian studies, but without mention of *στήλαι*.

<sup>15</sup> The precise significance of *ἀλλόφυλα* here is not quite clear. Does “Abamon” mean “non-Greek,” “non-Egyptian,” or just “non-philosophical”? At all events, it is intended as an arch put-down of Porphyry.

<sup>16</sup> *κοινὰ ἐννοίαι* are presumably the same as the *κοινὰ ὑπολήψεις* at the end of the previous chapter. Cf. Proclus, *Theol. plat.* 1.110.17–111.24; Julian, *Or.* 6.188d; Porphyry, *Abst.* 1.52.3–4.

Καὶ τὰ μὲν ἔργων πείρας δεόμενα πρὸς ἀκριβῆ κατανόησιν, μόνον διὰ λό-  
γων δυνατόν· τὰ δὲ νοερᾶς θεωρίας πλήρη τε ... καθαίρεσθαι, σημεῖα δὲ  
αὐτῆς ἀξιόλογα δύναται φράζειν ἀφ' ὧν δύνασαι καὶ σὺ καὶ οἱ σοὶ ὁμ-  
[7] οιοὶ τῷ νῷ παράγεσθαι περὶ τὴν οὐσίαν τῶν ὄντων· ὅσα δὲ τυγχάνει | 1  
διὰ λόγων ὄντα γνωστὰ τούτων οὐδὲν ἀπολείπομεν εἰς τὴν τελείαν ἀπό-  
δειξιν. Τὸ δ' οἰκεῖον ἐπὶ πᾶσιν ἀποδώσομέν σοι προσηκόντως, καὶ τὰ μὲν  
θεολογικὰ θεολογικῶς, θεουργικῶς δὲ τὰ θεουργικὰ ἀποκρινόμεθα, φι-  
λοσόφως δὲ τὰ φιλόσοφα μετὰ σοῦ συνεξετάσομεν· καὶ τούτων μὲν ὅσα 5  
εἰς τὰ πρῶτα αἷτια διήκει κατὰ τὰς πρώτας ἀρχὰς συνακολουθοῦντες εἰς  
φῶς προάξομεν, ὅσα δὲ περὶ ἡθῶν ἢ περὶ τελῶν εἴρηται κατὰ τὸν ἡθικὸν  
τύπον διαιτήσομεν δεόντως, καὶ τᾶλλα ὡσαύτως κατὰ τὸν οἰκεῖον τρόπον  
ἐν τάξει διαθησόμεθα· ἤδη δὲ ἀψώμεθα τῶν σῶν ἐρωτήσεων.

3 Φῆς τοίνυν πρῶτον διδόναι εἶναι θεούς· τὸ δ' ἐστὶν οὐκ ὀρθὸν 10  
οὕτωςι λεγόμενον. Συνυπάρχει γὰρ ἡμῶν αὐτῇ τῇ οὐσίᾳ ἢ περὶ θεῶν ἔμ-  
φυτος γνῶσις, κρίσεώς τε πάσης ἐστὶ κρείττων καὶ προαιρέσεως, λόγον  
τε καὶ ἀποδείξεως προϋπάρχει· συνήνωται τε ἐξ ἀρχῆς πρὸς τὴν οἰκείαν

[6].6 ἀκριβῆ M: om. V (lac. 6 ll.) | κατανόησιν μόνον M: κατανόη... V (lac. 17 ll.) || 7 δυνατόν] ἀδύνατον cj. Gale | τε... καθαίρεσθαι V (post τε lac. 20 ll.): om. M (lac. 22 ll.) || 8 δύναται] δυνατόν cj. Scott | δύνασαι M: δύνασθαι VW δύνασθε (ε s. v.) W<sup>c</sup> || 9 παράγεσθαι VM: περιάγεσθαι cj. Gale (versari) | περὶ M: om. V (lac. 8 ll.) || [7].2 τούτων (ων s. v.) cj. W<sup>c</sup>: τούτου VM om. M | οὐδὲν V: om. M (lac. 5 ll.) || 4 ἀποκρινόμεθα cj. Boulliau i. m. U: ἀποκρινόμεθα VM || 5 συνεξετάσομεν καὶ τούτων M: ξυνε... V (lac. 20 ll.) | μὲν ὅσα M: ὅσα μὲν V || 6 συνακολουθοῦντες V: συνεξακολουθοῦντες M || 13 προϋπάρχει V: ὑπάρχει M | τε<sup>2</sup> M: γε V

and clarity. Some of these, such as require experience of actions<sup>17</sup> for their accurate understanding, it will not be possible<sup>18</sup> <to deal with adequately> by words alone; others which are replete with intellectual insight<sup>19</sup> <we will not be able> to clarify <completely> but one can reveal noteworthy indications,<sup>20</sup> on the basis of which both you and those like you can be led intellectually to the essence of true being. Of such, finally, as are accessible to processes of logical reasoning we will spare no effort in making a full demonstration. We will provide, in an appropriate manner, explanations proper to each, dealing in a theological mode with theological questions and in theurgical terms with those concerning theurgy, while philosophical issues we will join with you in examining in philosophical terms.<sup>21</sup> And of these last, such as extend to the primal causal principles we will bring to light by pursuing them in accordance with the first principles, while such as concern ethics or the goals of human existence we will deal with as required, in an ethical mode; and we will deal in similar fashion with all other types of question, in due order. And now let us turn to your questions.

**3** You say first, then, that you “concede the existence of the gods”: but that is not the right way to put it. For an innate knowledge about the gods is coexistent with our nature, and is superior to all judgement and choice,<sup>22</sup> reasoning and proof. This

<sup>17</sup> Namely, theurgy.

<sup>18</sup> We accept Gale’s conjecture ἀδύνατον for the MSS δυνάτον, but there may be a deeper corruption. There are lacunae in both V and M in this passage.

<sup>19</sup> νοερὰ θεωρία, a favourite term of Iamblichus in his commentary on Aristotle’s *Categories*; cf. Dillon (1997). In the lacuna that follows, “Abamon” presumably says that it is not possible to clarify these problems fully for the uninitiated.

<sup>20</sup> Namely, of the νοερὰ θεωρία.

<sup>21</sup> This three-way distinction between theurgical, theological, and philosophical modes of discourse is quite common in Proclus’s commentaries and in his *Platonic Theology*. Cf. Dillon (1991); Smith (1993). Again, we see an elaborate put-down of Porphyry: the truths of theurgy are beyond him due to his sceptical mind-set, and even the higher truths of theology may be beyond his pedestrian capabilities.

<sup>22</sup> “Abamon” here makes use of two terms basic to the ancient philosophy of mind, κρείσς and προαίρεσις. The argument in favour of the natural belief in gods is ultimately of Stoic provenance.

- [8] | αἰτίαν, καὶ τῇ πρὸς τὰγαθὸν οὐσιώδει τῆς ψυχῆς ἐφέσει συνυφέστηκεν. 1  
 Εἰ δὲ δεῖ τάληθές εἰπεῖν, οὐδὲ γινῶσις ἐστὶν ἢ πρὸς τὸ θεῖον συν-  
 αφή. Διείργεται γὰρ αὕτη πως ἑτερότητι. Πρὸ δὲ τῆς ὡς ἑτέρας ἑτερον  
 γιγνωσκούσης αὐτοφνῆς ἐστὶν ... ἢ τῶν θεῶν ἐξηρητημένη μονοειδῆς συμ-  
 πλοκή. Οὐκ ἄρα συγχωρεῖν χρὴ ὡς δυναμένους αὐτὴν καὶ διδόναι καὶ μὴ 5  
 διδόναι, οὐδ' ὡς ἀμφίβολον τίθεσθαι (ἔστηκε γὰρ αἰεὶ κατ' ἐνέργειαν ἐν-  
 οειδῶς), οὐδ' ὡς κυρίους ὄντας τοῦ κρίνειν τε καὶ ἀποκρίνειν οὕτως αὐτὴν  
 δοκιμάζειν ἄξιον· περιεχόμεθα γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ μᾶλλον ἡμεῖς καὶ πληρούμεθα  
 ὑπ' αὐτῆς, καὶ αὐτὸ ὅπερ ἐσμέν ἐν τῷ τοὺς θεοὺς εἰδέναι ἔχομεν.  
 Ὁ δὲ αὐτός ἐστὶ μοι λόγος πρὸς σέ καὶ περὶ τῶν συνεπομένων θεοῖς 10  
 [9] κρειττόνων γενῶν, δαιμόνων φημι καὶ | ἡρώων καὶ ψυχῶν ἀχράντων· 1  
 καὶ γὰρ περὶ τούτων ἓνα λόγον ὠρισμένον τῆς οὐσίας αἰεὶ δεῖ νοεῖν, τὸ  
 δ' ἀόριστον καὶ ἄστατον τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ἀναιρεῖν δόσεως, καὶ τὸ μὲν ἐξ  
 ἀντιρρόπου τῶν διαλογισμῶν ἀντιστάσεως ἐπικλῖνον ἐπὶ θάτερα παραιτεῖ-  
 σθαι· ἀλλότριον γάρ ἐστι τῶν τοῦ λόγου καὶ τῆς ζωῆς ἀρχῶν τὸ τοιοῦτον, 5  
 ἐπὶ δὲ τὰ δεύτερα ἀποφέρεται μᾶλλον καὶ ὅσα τῇ δυνάμει καὶ τῇ ἐναντιώ-  
 σει τῆς γενέσεως προσήκει. Μονοειδῶς δὲ αὐτῶν ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι δεῖ.

[8].4 post ἐστὶν lac. 9 ll. dein τος in V (καὶ ἀδιάκρι add. in lac. V<sup>2</sup>), 10 ll. in M || 5 δυναμένους scripsi auctore Westerink; δυναμένης VM | διδόναι καὶ V: om. M || 7 κυρίους M: κυρίας scr. W κυρίης V | ὄντας M: οὔσης V || [9].3 δόσεως] φύσεως cj. Boulliau i. m. U

knowledge is united from the outset with its own cause, and exists in tandem with the essential striving of the soul towards the Good.

Indeed, to tell the truth, the contact we have with the divinity is not to be taken as knowledge. Knowledge, after all, is separated (from its object) by some degree of otherness.<sup>23</sup> But prior to that knowledge, which knows another as being itself other, there is the unitary connection with the gods that is natural <and indivisible>.<sup>24</sup> We should not accept, then, that this is something that we can either grant or not grant, nor admit to it as ambiguous (for it remains always uniformly in actuality), nor should we examine the question as though we were in a position either to assent to it or to reject it; for it is rather the case that we are enveloped by the divine presence, and we are filled with it, and we possess our very essence by virtue of our knowledge that there are gods.

And I make the same argument to you also as regards the superior classes of being<sup>25</sup> which follow upon the gods, I mean the daemons and heroes and pure souls; for in respect of them also one should always assume one definite account of their essence, and reject the indeterminacy and instability characteristic of the human condition;<sup>26</sup> one should also avoid the inclination to one side of an argument rather than another, resulting from the balanced antithesis of reasonings; for such a procedure is alien to the first principles of reason and life, and tends towards a secondary level of reality, such as belongs rather to the potentiality and contrariety of the realm of generation. The higher beings, by contrast, one should grasp with a uniform mode of cognition.

<sup>23</sup> This argument recalls that of Plotinus as to why knowledge, even self-knowledge, is incompatible with the absolute unity and simplicity of the One; see esp. *Enn.* 5.3.

<sup>24</sup> Accepting Ficino's filling of a small lacuna in the MSS.

<sup>25</sup> Or "greater kinds" (κρείττονα γενή), one of Iamblichus's best-known areas of interest, discussed in detail below. See further *De an.* §7; §26; §40 Finamore-Dillon (ap. Stobaeus 1:365; 1:377-378; 1:455 Wachsmuth).

<sup>26</sup> If δόσις here can mean something like "lot" or "destiny." Otherwise, one might accept Boulliau's conjecture φύσεως for the δόσεως of the MSS, though it is not palaeographically plausible.



Ἐοικέτω δὴ οὖν τοῖς αἰδίοις τῶν θεῶν συνοπαδοῖς καὶ ἡ σύμφυτος αὐτῶν κατανόησις· ὥσπερ οὖν αὐτοὶ τὸ εἶναι ἔχουσιν αἰεὶ ὡσαύτως, οὕτω καὶ ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη ψυχὴ κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ τῇ γνώσει πρὸς αὐτοὺς συναπτεσθῶ, 10 εἰκασία μὲν ἢ δόξη ἢ συλλογισμῶ τινι, ἀρχομένοις ποτὲ ἀπὸ χρόνου, μηδαμῶς τὴν ὑπὲρ ταῦτα πάντα οὐσίαν μεταδιώκουσα, ταῖς δὲ καθαραῖς καὶ ἀμέμπτοις νοήσεσιν αἷς εἵληφεν ἐξ αἰδίου παρὰ τῶν θεῶν, ταύταις αὐτοῖς [10] συνηρη|τημένη· σὺ δ' ἔοικας ἡγεῖσθαι τὴν αὐτὴν εἶναι τῶν θείων καὶ τῶν 1 ἄλλων ὁποίωνοις γινώσκων, δίδουσθαι τε ἀπὸ τῶν ἀντικειμένων τὸ ἕτερον μόριον, ὥσπερ εἶωθε καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἐν ταῖς διαλέκτοις προτεινομένων· τὸ δ' οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδαμῶς παραπλήσιον· ἐξήλλακται γὰρ αὐτῶν ἡ εἶδησις, ἀντιθέσεώς τε πάσης κεχώρισται, καὶ οὐκ ἐν τῷ συγχωρεῖσθαι νῦν ἢ ἐν τῷ 5 γίγνεσθαι ὑφέστηκεν, ἀλλ' ἦν ἐξ αἰδίου μονοειδὴς ἐπὶ τῇ ψυχῇ συνυπάρχουσα.

Περὶ μὲν οὖν τῆς πρώτης ἀρχῆς ἐν ἡμῖν, ἀφ' ἧς ὁρμαῖσθαι δεῖ τοὺς ὀτιοῦν λέγοντάς τε καὶ ἀκούοντας περὶ τῶν κρειττόνων ἢ καθ' ἡμᾶς, 10 τοιαῦτα πρὸς σὲ λέγω· 4 ἃ δ' ἐπιζητεῖς ιδιώματα τίνα ἐστὶν ἐκάστω τῶν κρειττόνων γενῶν, οἷς κεχώρισται ἀπ' ἀλλήλων, εἰ μὲν ὡς εἰδοποιούσας διαφορὰς ὑπὸ ταῦτ' ὅ γένος ἀντιδιαιρουμένας νοεῖς σὺ τὰ ιδιώματα, ὥσπερ ὑπὸ τὸ ζῶον τὸ λογικὸν καὶ ἄλογον, οὐδέποτε παραδεχόμεθα τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐπὶ τῶν μήτε κοινωνίαν οὐσίας μίαν μήτε ἐξισιάζουσας ἐχόντων ἀντιδιαί- [11] ρεσιν, μήτε | σύνθεσιν τὴν ἐξ ἀορίστου τοῦ κοινοῦ καὶ ὁρίζοντος τοῦ ἰδίου 1 προσλαμβάνοντων. Εἰ δ' ὡς ἐν προτέροις καὶ δευτέροις κατ' οὐσίαν τε ὅλην καὶ παντὶ τῷ γένει ἐξαλλαττομένοις ἀπλῆν τινα κατάστασιν πεπε- ρασμένην ἐν ἑαυτῇ τὴν ιδιότητα ὑπολαμβάνεις, ἔχει μὲν λόγον ἡ ἔννοια

[9].8 οὖν V: om. M || 10 ἡ V: om. M || 13 αἷς VM: ἄς i. m. V<sup>2</sup> || 14-[10].1 συνηρητημένη M: συνηρθρημένη (ἐν i. r.) V<sup>2</sup> συνηρθρημένοις W et (ut vid.) V || [10].3 διαλέκτοις M et (οἰς s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: διαλέκτων V || 9 περὶ VM: καὶ περὶ (καὶ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> | ἡ VM: p. n. V<sup>2</sup> || 12 νοεῖς (acc. mut., σ s. v.) M<sup>2</sup>: νόει VM || [11].1 τὴν M: τοῦ V || 2 εἰ δ' ὡς M et (εἰ δ' ὦν i. t., ὡς i. m.) V<sup>2</sup>: εἰδω V || 3 ἀπλῆν M: ἀπλοῦν V

So then, to the eternal companions of the gods, let there correspond also the innate cognition of them; even as they themselves possess a being of eternal identity, so too let the human soul join itself to them in knowledge on the same terms, not employing conjecture or opinion or some form of syllogistic reasoning,<sup>27</sup> all of which take their start from the plane of temporal reality, to pursue that essence which is beyond all these things, but rather connecting itself to the gods with pure and blameless reasonings, which it has received from all eternity from those same gods. You, however, seem to think that knowledge of divinity is of the same nature as a knowledge of anything else, and that it is by the balancing of contrary propositions that a conclusion is reached, as in dialectical discussions. But the cases are in no way similar. The knowledge of the gods is of a quite different nature, and is far removed from all antithetical procedure, and does not consist in the assent to some proposition now, nor yet at the moment of one's birth, but from all eternity it coexisted in the soul in complete uniformity.<sup>28</sup>

So this, then, is what I have to say to you about the first principle in us, from which anyone, who is to say or hear anything about the classes of being superior to us, must take a start.

4 As for the properties which you enquire about as pertaining to each of the superior classes, which distinguish them from each other, if you understand the properties as specific differences distinguished from one another by dichotomy within the same genus, as for example "rational" and "irrational" within the genus "Animal," we will never accept the existence of properties in this sense in the case of beings who have no community of essence, nor division into sub-species of the same rank, and which do not exhibit the synthesis of an indefinite element that is common, and a particular element that defines.<sup>29</sup> But if you understand "property," on the assumption that you are dealing with

<sup>27</sup> "Abamon" here combines the two modes of cognition proper to the lower half of the line simile in *Republic* 6, εἰκαστά and δόξα, with Aristotelian syllogistic, also regarded by Neoplatonists as a mode of reasoning proper only to the physical realm.

<sup>28</sup> It seems more logical to end the chapter here, but Ficino's chapter-division comes after the next sentence.

<sup>29</sup> "Abamon" seems here to be running through the various Aristotelian and Platonist techniques of definition.

τῶν ιδιωμάτων· χωριστὰ γὰρ ἔσται δῆπον ταῦτα καὶ ἀπλᾶ ἕκαστα ἐξηρη- 5  
μένα τῷ παντὶ τὰ τῶν αἰεὶ ὑπαρχόντων ιδιώματα. Ἡ δ' ἐρώτησις ἀτελῶς  
πρόεισιν· ἔδει μὲν γὰρ κατ' οὐσίαν πρῶτον, ἔπειτα κατὰ δύναμιν, εἴθ' οὐ-  
τω κατ' ἐνέργειαν, πυνθάνεσθαι τίνα αὐτῶν ὑπάρχει τὰ ιδιώματα· ὥς δὲ  
νῦν ἠρώτησας τίσιν ιδιώμασιν, ἐνεργειῶν μόνον εἴρηκας· ἐπὶ τῶν τελευ-  
ταίων ἄρα τὸ διάφορον ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐπιζητεῖς, τὰ δὲ πρῶτιστα αὐτῶν καὶ 10  
τιμιώτατα ὥσπερ εἰ στοιχεῖα τῆς παραλλαγῆς ἀφῆκας ἀδιερεύνητα.

Πρόσκειται δὲ δὴ αὐτόθι καὶ τὸ τῶν δραστικῶν ἢ παθητικῶν κινή-  
[12] σεων, ἡκιστα προσήκουσαν ἔχον διαίρεσιν | εἰς διαφορὰν τῶν κρείττονων 1  
γενῶν. Οὐδενὶ γὰρ αὐτῶν ἢ τοῦ δρᾶν καὶ πάσχειν ἔνεστιν ἐναντίωσις,  
ἀπόλυντοι δὲ τινες αὐτῶν καὶ ἄτρεπτοι καὶ ἄνευ τῆς πρὸς τὸ ἀντικείμενον  
σχέσεως θεωροῦνται αἱ ἐνέργειαι· ὅθεν οὐδὲ τὰς τοιαύτας κινήσεις τὰς  
ἐκ ποιοῦντος καὶ πάσχοντος ἐπ' αὐτῶν παραδεχόμεθα. Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῆς 5  
ψυχῆς τὴν ἀπὸ τοῦ κινουῦντος καὶ κινουμένου προσιέμεθα αὐτοκινήσιαν,  
ἀπλῆν δὲ τίνα κίνησιν οὐσιώδη αὐτὴν ἑαυτῆς οὔσαν, καὶ οὐ πρὸς ἕτερον  
ἔχουσαν σχέσιν, ἐξηρημένην τοῦ ποιεῖν εἰς ἑαυτὴν καὶ πάσχειν ὅφ' ἑαυ-  
τῆς ὑποτιθέμεθα αὐτὴν εἶναι. Ἡ πον ἄρα ἐπὶ τῶν κρείττονων τῆς ψυχῆς  
γενῶν ἀνάσχοιτο ἂν τις αὐτῶν κατὰ τὰς ποιητικὰς ἢ παθητικὰς κινήσεις 10  
διακρίνειν τὰς ιδιότητας;

Ἔτι τοίνυν ἀλλοτριῶς αὐτῶν κακεῖνο τὸ «ἢ τῶν παρεπομένων»  
προστίθεται. Ἐπὶ μὲν γὰρ τῶν συνθέτων καὶ τῶν μεθ' ἑτέρων ἢ ἐν ἄλ-

[11].6 ὑπαρχόντων M: ὑπερχόντων V || 9 (post ιδιώμασιν) κεχώρισται  
ιδιώματα add. cj. Gale τὰ τῶν add. cj. Sodano || [12].10 γενῶν V: μερῶν M  
|| 13 pr. καὶ M: ἤ... V (lac. 6 ll.)

primary and secondary entities that differ from each other in their whole nature and by entire genus, as a simple state delimited in itself, then this concept of property makes some sense; for these will certainly each be separate and simple, as totally transcendent properties of beings which exist eternally. But your question is imperfectly phrased; for you should have asked what properties there are first in respect of essence, then in respect of potency, and then again in respect of activity.<sup>30</sup> As it is, in the way that you have posed the question, you have mentioned only the activities. So it is only in respect of their lowest aspects that you are seeking to establish their differentiating property, leaving uninvestigated the primary and most noble aspects of their distinctness.

There arises at this point the question of active and passive motions, which involves a distinction most unsuitable for establishing the differentiating characteristic of the superior classes of being. For in none of them is there present the contrast between action and passivity, but their activities are considered to be absolute and unalterable and free from any relation to an opposite; in consequence, we do not accept as being relevant to their case motions which involve an agent and a patient. For not even in the case of the soul do we admit that self-motion, which arises from a moving and a moved element, but rather we take it be a simple and essential motion proper to itself alone, and not bearing any relation to anything else, transcending the opposition between acting upon itself and being acted upon by itself. Is it likely, then, that in the case of the classes superior to the soul, one would put up with distinguishing their properties according to active or passive motions?

Furthermore, your addition of the phrase “or of their accidents”<sup>31</sup> is inappropriate to these entities. In the case of composite entities, certainly, and of such as are involved with others or in

<sup>30</sup> “Abamon” scores a debating point here by making use of the distinction between essence, potency/potentiality and actuality/activity (οὐσία - δύναμις - ἐνέργεια), something that we see employed as a structuring principle throughout the *De mysteriis* and elsewhere in Iamblichus’s works, in particular the *De anima*. Cf. Shaw (1995, 78–79) and see below II.3 and note ad loc.

<sup>31</sup> Παρεπόμενος is a logical term denoting the necessary or accidental consequence of something, cf. Aristotle, *Soph. elench.* 168b30. Here it is used in the sense of “accident.”

λοις ὄντων καὶ τῶν περιεχομένων ὕφ' ἑτέροις τὰ μὲν ὡς προηγούμενα τὰ  
 [13] δ' ὡς ἐπόμενα νοεῖται, καὶ τὰ μὲν ὡς ὄντα τὰ δ' ὡς ἐπισυμβαίνοντα | 1  
 ταῖς οὐσίαις· σύνταξις γάρ τις αὐτῶν συνίσταται, ἀνοικειότης τε μετα-  
 ξὺ παρεμπίπτει καὶ διάστασις· ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν κρειττόνων πάντα ἐν τῷ εἶναι  
 νοεῖται, καὶ τὰ ὅλα προηγουμένως ὑπάρχει, χωριστά τέ ἐστι καθ' αὐτὰ  
 καὶ οὐκ ἄφ' ἑτέρων ἢ ἐν ἄλλοις ἔχοντα τὴν ὑπόστασιν. Ὡστε οὐδὲν ἐστίν 5  
 ἐπ' αὐτῶν παρεπόμενον· οὐκ οὐδ' ἀπὸ τούτων χαρακτηρίζεται αὐτῶν  
 ἢ ιδιότης.

Καὶ δὴ καὶ ἐπὶ τῷ τέλει τῆς ἐρωτήσεως συμφύρεις τὴν κατὰ φύσιν  
 διάκρισιν· τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἐρώτημα ἐπιζητεῖ πῶς ταῖς ἐνεργείαις καὶ ταῖς φν-  
 σικαῖς κινήσεσι καὶ τοῖς παρεπομένοις αἱ οὐσίαι γνωρίζονται. Τὸ δὲ πᾶν 10  
 τοῦναντίον ὑπάρχει· εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἦσαν αἱ ἐνέργειαι καὶ κινήσεις ὑποστατικαὶ  
 τῶν οὐσιῶν, αὗται καὶ τῆς διαφορότητος ἂν αὐτῶν ὑπῆρχον κύριαι· εἰ δ' αἱ  
 οὐσίαι γεννῶσι τὰς ἐνεργείας, αὗται πρότερον οὐσαι χωρίζονται παρέχουσι  
 [14] καὶ ταῖς κινήσεσι καὶ ἐνεργείαις καὶ τοῖς παρεπομένοις τὸ διίστασθαι· | 1  
 καὶ τοῦτο δὴ οὖν εἰς τὴν θήραν τῆς νυνὶ ζητουμένης ιδιότητος ὑπεναντίως  
 ἔχει.

Τὸ δ' ὅλον, πότερον ἐν γένος ἡγούμενος θεῶν, καὶ δαιμόνων ἐν, καὶ  
 ἡρώων ὡσαύτως, καὶ ψυχῶν τῶν καθ' αὐτὰς ἀσωμάτων, ἀπαιτεῖς αὐτῶν 5  
 τὴν κατὰ τὰ ιδιώματα διάκρισιν, ἢ πολλὰ ἕκαστα τιθέμενος; εἰ μὲν γὰρ  
 ἐν ἕκαστον ὑπολαμβάνεις, συγγεῖται πᾶσα τῆς ἐπιστημονικῆς θεολογίας  
 ἢ διάταξις· εἰ δ' ὥσπερ ἔστιν ἐμπλησθῆναι, τοῖς γένεσιν ἀφώρισται, καὶ  
 οὐκ ἔστιν ἐπ' αὐτοῖς εἰς οὐσιώδους κοινὸς λόγος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πρότερον αὐτῶν  
 ἀπὸ τῶν καταδεεστέρων ἐξήρηται, οὔτε οἷον τε κοινὰ αὐτῶν ἐξευρεῖν πέ- 10  
 ρατα· ἐάν τε καὶ ἦ δυνατόν, αὐτὸ δὲ τοῦτο τὰ ιδιώματα αὐτῶν ἀναιρεῖ·  
 ταύτη μὲν οὖν οὐκ ἂν τις εὖροι τὸ ἐπιζητούμενον· τὴν δ' ἀνὰ τὸν αὐ-  
 τὸν λόγον ταυτότητα ἐπὶ τῶν ἀναφερόντων ἀναλογιζόμενος, οἷον ἐπὶ τῶν  
 πολλῶν ἐν τοῖς θεοῖς γενῶν, καὶ αὐθις ἐπὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς δαίμοσι καὶ ἡρώσι,

[12].14 ἑτέροις M et (ι s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: ἑτέρους V || [13].2 ἀνοικειότης M:  
 ἀν... (8 ll.) ζ V ἐναντίοσις (sic; ἐν s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 4 ὅλα M: ἄλλα V || 8 δὴ  
 καὶ M: δὴ τῷ V δεῖ i. m. V<sup>2</sup> | συμφύρεις cj. Sicherl: συμφύρει M συμφέρει V  
 συμφέρειν (ν s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> συνεισφέρει cj. i. m. B<sup>4</sup> || 12 διαφορότητος (pr. α p. n.)  
 V<sup>2</sup> M<sup>2</sup>: ἀδιαφορότητος VM | ὑπῆρχον V: ἦσαν M

others, and of entities which are comprised by others, some elements are to be conceived of as principal and others as accessory, and some as forming part of the essence in question, while others supervene upon essences (for, in that case, a certain structuring of these takes place, and a degree of incompatibility and distance comes between them); but in the case of the superior classes of being everything is conceived as pertaining to essence, and it is the whole totality which exists principally; it exists separately by itself, and does not depend upon other things or reside in them. So there is in their case nothing that is an accident; and thus their distinguishing features cannot be characterised in this way.

And here again, at the end of your question, you confuse<sup>32</sup> the natural distinction; for the question asks "how essences may be recognised by their activities and their physical movements and their accidents." But in fact the case is quite the opposite; for if activities and motions were constitutive of essences, then these would determine their specific differences. But if it is essences that generate activities, then it is they, as having prior distinct existence, which bestow their distinctness upon motions and activities and accidents. So this too gets in the way of pursuing the specific difference now being enquired after.

To sum up, is it the case that you postulate just one class of gods, and one of daemons, and likewise of heroes, and of incorporeal souls taken on their own, when you ask for the distinguishing of their specific properties, or do you recognise a plurality of them? For if you take each of them to be a unity, then the whole structure of scientific theology is thrown into confusion; but if, as one may satisfy oneself is the case, they form distinct genera, and there is no single essential definition common to all of them, but the prior among them are separate from the inferior, it is no longer possible to discover any common terms for them. And if we admit that this may be so, this very fact eliminates the possibility of there being any characteristic attributes of them as a whole; so by following this route one is not going to discover what one is seeking. But if one were to apply an analogical principle of identity to the entities in question, as for example to the many genera of gods,

<sup>32</sup> Accepting Sicherl's (1957) conjecture *συμφύρεις*, adopted by Des Places, for the *συμφύρει* of M, and the *συμφέρει* of V. Gale's conjecture *συνεπισφέρει*, adopted by Taylor, seems quite misguided.

καὶ τὸ τελευταῖον ἐπὶ τῶν ψυχῶν, δύναται ἂν τις αὐτῶν ἀφορίζεσθαι τὴν 15  
ιδιότητα.

[15] | Τίς μὲν οὖν ὀρθότης ἦν τῆς παρούσης ἐρωτήσεως καὶ διορισμὸς 1  
αὐτῆς, πῶς ἀδύνατος καὶ πῶς δυνατὴ γίνεσθαι, διὰ τοῦτο ἡμῖν παραδε-  
δείχθη· 5 ἴωμεν δ' ἐφεξῆς ἐπὶ τὴν ἀπόκρισιν ὣν ἐπεζήτησας.

Ἔστι δὴ οὖν ἀγαθὸν τό τε ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας καὶ τὸ κατ' οὐσίαν 5  
ὑπάρχον· ἐκείνην λέγω τὴν οὐσίαν τὴν πρεσβυτάτην καὶ τιμιωτάτην καὶ 5  
καθ' αὐτὴν οὖσαν ἀσώματον, θεῶν ἰδίωμα ἐξαίρετον καὶ κατὰ πάντα τὰ  
γένη τὰ περὶ αὐτοὺς ὄντα, τηροῦν μὲν αὐτῶν τὴν οἰκείαν διανομὴν καὶ  
τάξιν καὶ οὐκ ἀποσπώμενον ταύτης, τὸ αὐτὸ δ' ὁμῶς ἐν ὅλοις ὡσαύτως  
ὑπάρχον.

Ψυχαῖς δὲ ταῖς ἀρχούσαις τῶν σωμάτων καὶ προηγουμέναις αὐτῶν 10  
τῆς ἐπιμελείας καὶ πρὸ τῆς γενέσεως τεταγμέναις αἰδίους καθ' ἑαυτὰς  
οὐσία μὲν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ οὐκέτι πάρεστιν, οὐδ' αἰτία τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ προτέρα  
οὐσα καὶ τῆς οὐσίας, ἐποχὴ δέ τις ἀπ' αὐτοῦ καὶ ἕξις παραγίνεται· οἷαν  
θεωροῦμεν τὴν τοῦ κάλλους καὶ τῆς ἀρετῆς μετουσίαν πολὺν διάφορον οὐ-  
[16] σαν ἢ οἷαν νοοῦμεν ἐπὶ τῶν | ἀνθρώπων· αὕτη μὲν γὰρ ἀμφίβολός τις 1  
καὶ ὥσπερ ἐπίκτητος ἐν τοῖς συνθέτοις παραγίνεται, ἢ δ' ἀμετάστατος  
ἐνίδρυνται ταῖς ψυχαῖς καὶ ἀνέκλειπτος, οὔτε αὐτὴ ποτε ἐξισταμένη ἀφ'  
ἑαυτῆς, οὔθ' ὑπ' ἄλλων τινῶν ἀφαιρουμένη.

Ἀρχῆς δὴ οὖν καὶ τελευτῆς τοιαύτης οὐσης ἐν τοῖς θείοις γένεσι, 5  
δύο τῶν ἀκρῶν ὄρων τούτων μεταξὺ νόει μεσότητας, ὑψηλότεραν μὲν τῆς  
τῶν ψυχῶν τάξεως, τὴν τῶν ἡρώων ἐπιτεταγμένην, δυνάμει καὶ ἀρετῇ  
κάλλει τε καὶ μεγέθει καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς περὶ τὰς ψυχὰς ἀγαθοῖς οὐσι παντε-  
λῶς αὐτὴν ὑπερέχουσαν, προσεχῇ δ' ὁμῶς αὐταῖς συναπτομένην διὰ τὴν  
τῆς ζωῆς ὁμοειδῆ συγγένειαν· τῆς δὲ τῶν θεῶν ἐξηρητημένην τὴν τῶν δαι- 10  
μόνων, μακροῦ δὴ τινι καταδεεστέραν αὐτῆς, συνακολουθοῦσαν, ἅτε δὴ οὐ

[15].11 πρὸ V<sup>c</sup>vel V<sup>2</sup>: πρὸς VM || 13 οἷαν scr. Gale: οἷαν VM οἷα cj.  
BU || 15 ἢ M: εἰς V || [16].3 αὕτη cj. B: αὐτὴ V αὕτη M || 6 μεσότητας  
M: μεσότητα V

and again to those among the daemons and heroes, and lastly in the case of souls, then one might succeed in defining their specific characteristics.

So, then, we may take as demonstrated in this way what is the correct basis of the present enquiry, and its definition, and how it could and could not be posed.

5 Let us next pass on to making a reply to your questions. Well then, there is the good that is beyond being<sup>33</sup> and there is that which exists on the level of being. By "being" I mean the most senior, the most honoured and that which is by its own nature incorporeal, the particular feature of gods, running through all the classes which constitute them, which on the one hand preserves their proper distribution and order and does not deviate from this, while on the other hand manifesting itself the same in the same way in all of them.

But as for souls that rule over bodies and preside over their administration, and which, before descending into generation, are established as eternal on their own, the essence of the Good is no longer present to them, nor yet the cause of Good, which is prior even to its essence,<sup>34</sup> but nevertheless they do enjoy a degree of retention and possession of it. It is thus that we observe their participation in beauty and virtue far exceeds that which we notice in the case of human beings; for in composite beings, such participation is equivocal and, as it were, adventitious, whereas the other type is rooted immovably and inextinguishably in souls, subject neither to removal spontaneously nor to displacement by other, external forces.

Such being the first and last principles among the divine classes, you may postulate, between these extremes, two means: the one just above the level of souls being that assigned to the heroes, thoroughly superior in power and excellence, beauty and grandeur, and in all the goods proper to souls, but nevertheless proximate to these by reason of homogeneous kinship of life; and the other, more immediately dependent upon the race of gods, that of the daemons, which, though far inferior to it, yet follows

<sup>33</sup> A clear reference to Plato, *Resp.* 6.509b.

<sup>34</sup> A covert allusion to the Neoplatonic One.



πρωτοουργὸν οὖσαν, ὑπηρετικὴν δέ τινα τῆς ἀγαθῆς βουλήσεως τῶν θεῶν  
 συνεπομένην, καὶ ἐκφαίνουσιν εἰς ἔργον τὸ ἀφανὲς αὐτῶν ἀγαθόν, ἀπει-  
 καζομένην τε πρὸς αὐτό, καὶ τὰ δημιουργήματα ἐπιτελοῦσαν πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ  
 [17] ἀφομοιούμενα, τό τε γὰρ ἄρρητον αὐτοῦ ῥητὸν καὶ τὸ ἀνείδεον ἐν εἵδσει 1  
 διαλάμπουσιν, καὶ τὸ ὑπὲρ πάντα λόγον αὐτοῦ εἰς λόγους φανεροὺς προσ-  
 ἀγουσιν, καὶ δεχομένην μὲν ἤδη τῶν καλῶν τὴν μετουσίαν συμπεφυκυῖαν,  
 παρέχουσιν δ' αὐτὴν ἀφθόγως τοῖς μεθ' ἑαυτὴν γένεσι καὶ διαφορθμεύου-  
 σαν. 5

Ταῦτα δὴ οὖν τὰ γένη μέσα συμπληροῦνται τὸν κοινὸν σύνδεσμον  
 θεῶν τε καὶ ψυχῶν, καὶ ἀδιάλυτον αὐτῶν τὴν συμπλοκὴν ἀπεργάζεται,  
 μίαν τε συνέχειαν ἄνωθεν μέχρι τοῦ τελοῦς συνδεῖ, καὶ ποιεῖ τῶν ὅλων  
 τὴν κοινωνίαν εἶναι ἀδιαίρετον, κοῤῥασίν τε ἀρίστην καὶ σύμμιξιν τοῖς ὅλοις  
 ἔχει σύμμετρον, προόδόν τε ἀπὸ τῶν βελτιόνων ἐπὶ τὰ ἐλάττωνα καὶ ἀν- 10  
 αγωγὴν ἀπὸ τῶν ὑποδεεστέρων ἐπὶ τὰ πρότερα διαβιβάζει πῶς ἐξ ἴσου,  
 τάξιν τε καὶ μέτρα τῆς κατιούσης μεταδόσεως ἀπὸ τῶν ἀμεινόνων καὶ  
 τῆς ἐγγιγνομένης ὑποδοχῆς ἐν τοῖς ἀτελεστέροις ἐντίθησι καὶ ποιεῖ πάν-  
 τα πᾶσι προσήγορα καὶ συναρμόζοντα, ἄνωθεν τὰς τούτων ὅλων αἰτίας  
 ἀπὸ τῶν θεῶν παραδεχόμενα. 15

[18] | Ταύτην δὴ οὖν τὴν διαίρεσιν μὴ νομίσῃς ἰδίαν εἶναι δυνάμεων ἢ 1  
 ἐνεργειῶν ἢ οὐσίας, μηδὲ χωρὶς διαλαβῶν ἐφ' ἐνὸς αὐτῶν ἐπισκόπει, κοινῇ  
 δὲ κατὰ πάντων αὐτὴν διατείνας τούτων, τὸ τέλος ἀποδώσεις τῇ ἀπο-  
 κρίσει περὶ ὧν ἐπεζήτησας θείων τε καὶ δαιμονίων καὶ ἡρωικῶν καὶ τῶν

[16].13 καὶ M: om. V || [17].1 ἀνείδεον M et (ε s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: ἀνείδιον V  
 || 7 καὶ<sup>2</sup> M et i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: om. V || 10 ἔχει VM: παρέχει cj. Sicherl || 11  
 ὑποδεεστέρων (ὑπο s. v.) M<sup>2</sup>: δεεστέρων VM | διαβιβάζει V: ἀναβιβάζει M

in its train:<sup>35</sup> it is not a primary initiator of action,<sup>36</sup> but submits itself to the service of the good will of the gods it follows, revealing in action their invisible goodness, while likening itself to it, producing creations which are in its image, giving expression to the ineffable and causing the formless to shine forth in forms, bringing out onto the level of manifest discourse that which is superior to all reasoning,<sup>37</sup> and receiving already that degree of participation in beauty which is innate to them, while providing and conveying<sup>38</sup> it unstintingly to the classes of being that come after it.

These classes of being, then, bring to completion as intermediaries the common bond that connects gods with souls, and causes their linkage to be indissoluble. They bind together a single continuity from top to bottom, and render the communion of all things indivisible. They constitute the best possible blending and proportionate mixture for everything, contriving in pretty well equal measure a progression from the superior to the lesser, and a re-ascent from the inferior to the prior. They implant order and measure into the participation descending from the better and the receptivity engendered in less perfect beings, and make all things amenable and concordant with all others, as they receive from the gods on high the causal principles of all these things.<sup>39</sup>

Do not, by the way, take this division as characterising exclusively either potencies or activities or essence, nor consider it in a compartmentalised way as concerning any one of these aspects alone; but if you see it rather as extending throughout all of them, you will attain the perfect response to your enquiry as to the

<sup>35</sup> A reference, probably, to Plato, *Phaedr.* 246e, where the daemons are portrayed as following in the train of the gods in their heavenly ride.

<sup>36</sup> We take this to be the meaning of *πρωτοουργός*.

<sup>37</sup> This clause, with its play on the various meanings of *λόγος*, casts the daemons in the role of *λόγοι*, being projected from the realm of *νοῦς*, which is the divine realm.

<sup>38</sup> *διαπορθμεύουσιν* here is an echo of the famous passage on daemons in the *Symposium* 202e, where their characteristics are described for the first time in Greek literature.

<sup>39</sup> The daemons and heroes are here credited most comprehensively with the whole process of cosmic sympathy on which the theory of theurgy is largely based. Cf. I.7 for the same methodology.

ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς ἰδιωμάτων.

5

Κατ' ἄλλην δ' αὖθις ἀφορμὴν τὸ μὲν ἡνωμένον πᾶν ὅσον ἂν ᾗ καὶ ὁποῖον καὶ τὸ μονίμως ἰδρυμένον ἐν ἑαυτῷ, τό τε τῶν ἀμερίστων οὐσιῶν αἴτιον καὶ τὸ ἀκίνητον, οὕτω νοούμενον ὡς αἴτιον εἶναι πάσης κινήσεως, τό τε ὑπερέχον τῶν ὅλων καὶ μηδ' ὅτιοῦν ἔχον κοινὸν πρὸς αὐτά, καὶ δὴ καὶ τὸ ἄμικτον καὶ χωριστὸν ἐν τῷ εἶναί τε καὶ δύνασθαι καὶ ἐνεργεῖν κοι- 10 νῶς νοούμενον, πάντα δὲ τὰ τοιαῦτα τοῖς θεοῖς ἀνατιθέναι ἄξιον. Τὸ δ' εἰς πληθος ἤδη διακρινόμενον καὶ δυνάμενον ἑαυτὸ διδόναι ἄλλοις, δεχόμενον τε ἀφ' ἐτέρων τὸ πέρας ἐν ἑαυτῷ, καὶ ἱκανὸν μὲν ἐν ταῖς διανομαῖς ὅν τῶν μεριστῶν ὥστε καὶ ταῦτα ἀποπληροῦν, κινήσεως δὲ πρωτοουργοῦ καὶ [19] ζωοποιοῦ | μέτοχον, κοινωνίαν τε ἔχον πρὸς ὅλα τὰ ὄντα καὶ τὰ γιγνώ- 1 μενα, σύμμιξιν τε ἀπὸ πάντων παραλαμβάνον, καὶ σύγκρασιν ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ ἐπὶ πάντα παρεχόμενον, καὶ ταῦτα δι' ὅλων τῶν ἐν ἑαυτῷ δυνάμεων τε καὶ οὐσιῶν καὶ ἐνεργειῶν διατεῖνον τὰ ἰδιώματα, τοῦτο δὴ πᾶν ἔμφυτον ταῖς ψυχαῖς ἀποδῶμεν, ἀληθῆ λέγοντες.

5

6 Τί οὖν δὴ περὶ τῶν μέσων ἐροῦμεν; ἡγοῦμαι μὲν αὐτὰ εἶ-  
ναι κατάδηλα πᾶσιν ἀπὸ τῶν προειρημένων· συμπληροῖ γὰρ καὶ ἐνταῦθα  
τῶν ἄκρων τὴν ἀλληλουχίαν ἀδιαίρετον· οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ δεῖ καὶ ἐπεξελθεῖν  
τῷ λόγῳ. Τίθεμαι δὴ οὖν τὸ μὲν δαιμόνιον φῦλον ἐν τῷ ἐνὶ πληθυνόμε-  
νον καὶ συμμιγνύμενον ἀμιγῶς, καὶ τᾶλλα πάντα τὰ καταδεέστερα κατὰ 10  
τὴν τοῦ βελτίονος ἰδέαν προσειληφός, τὸ δ' αὖ τῶν ἡρώων προστησάμε-  
νον μὲν προχειρότερον τὴν διαίρεσιν λέγω καὶ τὸ πληθος τὴν τε κίνησιν  
καὶ τὴν σύμμιξιν καὶ τὰ συγγενῆ τούτοις, ἄνωθεν δ' ἐφεστηκότα καὶ οἶον  
ἀποκρυπτόμενα εἰς τὸ ἔσω τὰ βελτίονα παραδεχόμενον, ἐνωσὶν φημι καὶ

[18].6 ἀφορμὴν V: ὑφορμὴν M || 11 δὲ V et (ut vid.) M: δὴ M<sup>2</sup> ||  
[19].9 φῦλον scr. (ῦ s. v.) W<sup>2</sup>: φίλον VWM || 11 προσειληφός V: προσειληφώς  
M || 11-12 προστησάμενον VM: προσθησάμενον (θ s. v.) V<sup>c</sup>

distinctive properties of gods and daemons and heroes, as well as those in souls.<sup>40</sup>

To approach the question from another perspective: on the one hand, unity in all its extension and all its forms, permanent stability in oneself, the quality of being the cause of indivisible essences, an immobility such as may be conceived of as being the cause of every motion, a superiority over all beings which precludes having anything in common with them and, furthermore, the conception of being unmixed and transcendent alike in essence, potency and activity—all such characteristics should be attributed to the gods. On the other hand, the quality of being distinguished into multiplicity and the ability to give oneself to others, while receiving into oneself from elsewhere one's principle of limitation, and having the capacity in the divisions of dispartible things to bring them to completion, while participating in primordial and life-giving motion; having communion with all that is and all that comes to be, receiving commixture from all quarters, and providing from oneself a principle of blending to all, and the extending of these properties to all one's inherent potencies and essences and activities—all this we would attribute to souls as being innate to them, and we would be right to do so.<sup>41</sup>

6 What, then, are we to say about the intermediate classes? I think that this should be quite clear to anyone after what has already been said: here too, they serve to fill out the indivisible mutuality<sup>42</sup> of the two extremes. However, we should expound this also in greater detail. I declare, then, that that the class of daemons is multiplied in unity, and undergoes mixture without contamination, and that it comprehends all the other beings inferior to it under the form of what is better; while that of heroes, I would say, brings more to the fore division and multiplicity, motion and mingling and what is cognate with these, but it receives also, bestowed from on high and, as it were, hidden within it, the

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Plato, *Resp.* 8.546b7; *Theaet.* 146a8.

<sup>41</sup> This remarkably turgid paragraph has as its purpose the setting out in opposition to each other a full list of the characteristics of gods and souls respectively, as being the two extremes in the spectrum of immaterial beings.

<sup>42</sup> The term ἀλλήλουχία is distinctive. It occurs again at IV.12, and at *Protr.* 21.17 to describe the unity and reciprocity of the cosmos. It is hard to pick an English term to do justice to all its nuances.

[20] καθαρότητα καὶ τὴν μό|ριμον κατάστασιν, ταυτότητά τε ἀμέριστον καὶ 1  
 ὑπεροχὴν τῶν ἄλλων. Ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἑκατέρου τούτων τῶν γενῶν προσεχοῦς  
 ὄντος ἑκατέρῳ τῶν ἄκρων, τοῦ μὲν τῷ πρωτίστῳ, τοῦ δὲ τῷ ἐσχάτῳ,  
 εἰκότως δὲ κατὰ συνεχεῖς συγγενείας τὸ μὲν ἀρχόμενον ἀπὸ τῶν ἀρί-  
 στων προέεισιν ἐπὶ τὰ ἐλάττωτα, τὸ δὲ προβαλλόμενον πρώτως τὴν πρὸς 5  
 τὰ ἔσχατα συναφὴν ἐπικοινωνεῖ πως καὶ τῶν ὑπερεχόντων τὴν μέντοι  
 συμπλήρωσιν καὶ ἀπὸ τούτων ἂν τις κατανοήσῃ τῶν πρώτων τε καὶ τε-  
 λυνταίων γενῶν, καὶ ταύτην ὁλόκληρον συμφυρομένην ὁμοίως μὲν ἐν τῷ  
 ὑπάρχειν ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἐν τῷ δύνασθαι τε καὶ ἐνεργεῖν· ὅποτε δὴ οὖν  
 ἐπὶ τῶν δύο τούτων ἐφόδῳ τελείαν ἀπεπληρώσαμεν τὴν τῶν τεττάρων 10  
 γενῶν διαίρεσιν, ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων συντομίας ἕνεκα, καὶ διότι φανερὰ πῶς  
 ἐστὶ τὸ λοιπὸν ἢ τῶν μέσων περιλήψις, ἐξαρκεῖν οἰόμεθα μόνα τὰ ἄκρα  
 παραδεικνύειν ἰδιώματα, τὰ δὲ μέσα ὡς ἂν ὄντα ἀπ' αὐτῶν γνῶριμα παρα-  
 λείψομεν, ὥδε πως αὐτῶν ποιούμενοι διὰ βραχυτάτων ἀφορισμῶν.

[21] | 7 Τὸ μὲν ἐστὶν ἄκρον καὶ ὑπερέχον καὶ ὁλοτελές, τὸ δὲ τε- 1  
 λυνταῖον καὶ ἀπολειπόμενον καὶ ἀτελέστερον· καὶ τὸ μὲν πάντα δύναται  
 ἅμα ἐν τῷ νῦν μονοειδῶς, τὸ δὲ οὔτε ὅλα οὔτε ἀθρόως οὔτε ἐξαίφνης  
 οὔτε ἀμερίστως. Καὶ τὸ μὲν ἀκλινῶς ἀπογεννᾷ πάντα καὶ ἐπιτροπεύει,  
 τὸ δ' ἔχει φύσιν ἐπινεύειν καὶ ἐπιστρέφεσθαι πρὸς τὰ γιγνόμενά τε καὶ 5  
 διοικούμενα. Καὶ τὸ μὲν ἀρχικὸν καὶ αἴτιον προκατάρχει πάντων, τὸ δ' ἐξ  
 αἰτίας ἡρηγμένον, τῆς τῶν θεῶν βουλήσεως, ἐξ αἰδίου συννυφέστηκεν. Καὶ  
 τὸ μὲν κατὰ μίαν ὀξεῖαν ἀκμὴν τὰ τέλη τῶν ἐνεργειῶν ὅλων καὶ οὐσιῶν  
 συνείληφε, τὸ δ' ἀπ' ἄλλων εἰς ἄλλα μεταβαίνει, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀτελοῦς προ-  
 χωρεῖ εἰς τὸ τέλειον. Ἔτι τῷ μὲν ὑπάρχει τὸ ἀκρότατον καὶ ἀπερίληπτον, 10  
 κρεῖττόν τε παντὸς μέτρου, καὶ ἀνείδεον οὕτως ὡς ὑπ' οὐδενὸς εἶδους

[20].2 ἑκατέρου M: ἑκατέρω V || 3 τοῦ... τοῦ V: τὸ... τὸ M ||  
 11 συντομίας (τοὺς p. n.) V<sup>2</sup> et (τοὺς del.) M<sup>2</sup>: συντομίας τοὺς VM || 14  
 βραχυτάτων (acc. mut., ω s. v.) M<sup>2</sup>: βραχύτατον VM βραχυτάτων τὸν cj. Gale  
 Sicherl || [21].1 ὁλοτελές (ὅλο s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: ἀτελές VM || 6 καί<sup>2</sup> VM: p. n. V<sup>2</sup>

better elements, by which I mean unity and purity and permanent stability, undivided identity and transcendence over other things. Given, then, that each of these two classes is contiguous to one or other of the extreme terms, the former with the first, the latter with the lowest, it is natural that, in accordance with their immediate affinities, the one which takes its inception from the best should proceed to the inferior, while that which has originally projected itself towards contact with the lowest term should in some manner enjoy communion also with the superior; so from these intermediate terms also one may deduce the fullness of communion between the primal and ultimate classes, and that this communion operates equally in the modes of essence, of potency, and of act. When once, then, we have, with the aid of these two methods of approach, completely set out the distinction between these four classes, in respect of the remaining ones, in the interests of brevity, and because the grasping of the nature of the intermediates is now reasonably clear, we consider it to be sufficient to exhibit the properties only of the extreme terms, and omit those of the intermediates as being derivable from these, defining them only in the briefest manner, as follows.

7 The one (of these extremes) is at the summit, and transcendent and perfect, while the other is at the bottom, deficient, and relatively imperfect; the one can achieve all things simultaneously, in the present instant, unitarily, while the other can achieve neither all things nor all at once nor suddenly nor indivisibly. The former generates and governs all things without inclining towards them, while the other is naturally disposed to incline and turn itself towards the things generated and governed by it. The former possesses the faculty of ruling and pre-exists as cause of all, while the latter, dependent on its cause, the will of the gods, subsists with them from all eternity. The former, in a single swift moment, comprehends the supreme ends of all activities and essences, while the latter passes from some things to others, and proceeds from the incomplete to the complete. Further, to the one there pertains what is highest and most incomprehensible, superior to all measure, and formless in the sense of being unbounded

περιορισμένον, τὸ δὲ καὶ ῥοπῇ καὶ σχέσει καὶ νεύσει κρατεῖται, ὁρέξεσί  
 τε τοῦ χείρονος καὶ οἰκειώσει τῶν δευτέρων κατέχεται, λοιπόν τε παντο-  
 दापोῖς καὶ τοῖς ἀπ' αὐτῶν μέτροις εἰδοποιεῖται. Νοῦς τοίνυν ἡγεμὼν καὶ  
 [22] βασιλεὺς | τῶν ὄντων τέχνη τε δημιουργικὴ τοῦ παντός τοῖς μὲν θεοῖς 1  
 ὡσαύτως ἀεὶ πάρεστι τελέως καὶ αὐταρκῶς καὶ ἀνεκδεῶς, κατὰ μίαν ἐν-  
 ἔργειαν ἐστῶσαν ἐν ἑαυτῇ καθαρῶς, ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ νοῦ τε μετέχει μεριστοῦ  
 καὶ πολυειδοῦς εἰς τὴν τοῦ ὅλου τε προστασίαν ἀναποβλέποντος, καὶ αὐτὴ  
 τῶν ἀνύχων ἐπιμελεῖται ἄλλοτε ἐν ἄλλοις εἶδεσιν ἐγγιγνομένη. 5

Ἀπὸ δὴ τῶν αὐτῶν αἰτίων τοῖς μὲν κρείττοσιν αὐτὴ ἡ τάξις, αὐ-  
 τὸ τὸ κάλλος συνπαράχει, ἢ εἰ οὕτω τις βούλοιτο ὑποτίθεσθαι, ἡ αἰτία  
 τούτων συνυφέστηκεν, τῇ δὲ ψυχῇ νοερᾷ τάξεως καὶ θείου κάλλους με-  
 ταλαγχάνειν ἀεὶ σύνεστι· καὶ τοῖς μὲν τὸ μέτρον τῶν ὅλων ἢ τὸ τοῦδε  
 αἵτιον σύνδρομον πάρεστι διὰ παντός, ἡ δὲ τῷ θείῳ πέρατι ἀφορίζεται, 10  
 καὶ τούτου μετέχει μεριστῶς. Καὶ τοῖς μὲν ἐξαρκεῖν ἐφ' ὅλα τὰ ὄντα τῇ  
 τῆς αἰτίας δυνάμει καὶ τῇ ἐπικρατεῖα εὐλόγως ἂν ἀποδοίη τις, ἡ δ' ἔχει  
 τινὰ πέρατα διεπιλημμένα μέχρις ὅσων ἐπάρχειν δύναται.

[21].13-14 παντοδαποῖς] an παντοδαπῶς? || [22].2 αὐταρκῶς cj. Sicherl  
 (cf. 144, 4): αὐτ... (lac. 6 ll.) V αὐ... (lac. 7 ll.) M; an αὐτοτελῶς vel αὐτομά-  
 τως? || 5 ἄλλοτε — ἐγγιγνομένη = Plato, *Phaedr.*, 246b8 (ubi γιγνομένη) ||  
 6 αἰτίων M: αἰτιῶν V || 7 ἢ εἰ (εἰ i. m.) V<sup>2</sup> et (εἰ s. v.) M<sup>2</sup>: ἢ VM || 10  
 πέρατι M et (τι i. m.) V<sup>2</sup>: πέρα V || 11 ἐξαρκεῖν (v s. v.) M<sup>c</sup>: ἐξαρκεῖ VM ||  
 13 ἐπάρχειν cj. Gale: ἐπάρχη VM

by any form, while the other is dominated by inclination and relation and propensity,<sup>43</sup> and is in the grip of impulses towards the worse and kinship with things secondary to it, and consequently given form by the multifarious measures deriving from them. So then, Intellect, as leader and king of the realm of Being,<sup>44</sup> and the art<sup>45</sup> which creates the universe, is present continuously and uniformly to the gods, perfectly and self-sufficiently free from any deficiency, established in itself purely and in accordance with one sole activity, while the soul participates in a partial and multiform intellect,<sup>46</sup> which has its attention directed to the government of the universe, and itself has care for the inanimate realm, being generated at different times in different forms.

Arising from the same causes, the superior classes of being possess essential order and essential beauty, or if one wishes to express it so, it is the causal principle of these that coexists with them,<sup>47</sup> while it belongs to the soul to participate continuously in intelligible order and divine beauty. The gods have present to them throughout, concurrently with their essence, the measure of the universe or the cause of this, while Soul is defined by the divine principle of limit, and participates in this in a partial mode. And to the former class one may reasonably attribute dominance over all beings through the power and sovereignty of its causal principle, while the latter has certain fixed limits up to which it can extend its power.

<sup>43</sup> *ῥοπή*, *σχέσις* and *νεύσις* are all terms proper to the state of being of the soul, used frequently elsewhere by Iamblichus and by other Neoplatonists. For *ῥοπή*, cf. Iamblichus, *Comm. Phaed.* frg. 5 Dillon; *Comm. Tim.* frg. 16. For *σχέσις*, Proclus, *Comm. Resp.* 1.207.18; 2.310.1; *Comm. Tim.* 1.115.25; 1.141.16. For *νεύσις*, Iamblichus, *Comm. Tim.* frg. 40.4 Dillon; Proclus, *Comm. Tim.* 1.52.23; 3.258.19; 3.325.6.

<sup>44</sup> This seems to combine a reference to Plato, *Phaedr.* 246e4 with that of *Phileb.* 30d1–2, where Zeus is referred to as having a *βασιλική φυσική* and a *βασιλικὸς νοῦς* – Zeus in each case being identified with the Neoplatonic hypostasis of Intellect.

<sup>45</sup> *τέχνη* could just as well be rendered “skill” or “craft.”

<sup>46</sup> In terms of Iamblichean theory, this would be the lowest element in the intelligible realm, the participated Intellect, cf. *Comm. Tim.* frg. 55 and 56 Dillon.

<sup>47</sup> That is, the gods possess order and beauty *κατ’ αἴτιαν*, in Neoplatonic terms, cf. Proclus, *ET* prop. 65, and Dodds’s note ad loc.



[23] Τοιούτων δὴ ὄντων τῶν διαφόρων ιδιωμάτων ἐν τοῖς | ἄκροις, οὐ 1  
χαλεπῶς ἄν τις, ὃ δὴ νῦν ἐλέγομεν, καὶ τὰ μέσα αὐτῶν ιδιώματα τὰ τῶν  
δαιμόνων τε καὶ ἡρώων ἐννοήσῃ, σύνεγγυς ὄντα ἐκατέρω τῶν ἄκρων,  
ἔχοντα ὁμοιότητα πρὸς ἐκάτερον καὶ ἀπ' ἀμφοτέρων ἀφιστάμενα πρὸς τὸ  
μέσον, σύμμικτόν τε ἀπ' αὐτῶν τὴν ὁμοιοσητικὴν κοινωνίαν συμπλέκοντα 5  
καὶ πρὸς αὐτὴν ἐν μέτροις τοῖς προσήκουσι συμπλεκόμενα. Τοιαῦτα δὴ  
οὕτως νοεῖσθω τῶν πρώτων θείων γενῶν τὰ ιδιώματα.

8 Οὐ μέντοι τὴν ὑπὸ σοῦ διάκρισιν ὑποτετινομένην αὐτῶν προσ-  
ίεμεθα, ἥτις τὴν πρὸς τὰ διαφέροντα σώματα κατὰταξιν, οἷον θεῶν μὲν  
πρὸς τὰ αἰθέρια, δαιμόνων δὲ πρὸς τὰ ἀέρια, ψυχῶν δὲ τῶν περὶ γῆν, 10  
αἰτίαν εἶναι φησὶ τῆς νυνὶ ζητουμένης διαστάσεως. Ἡ τε γὰρ κατὰταξις,  
οἷον τοῦ Σωκράτους εἰς τὴν φυλὴν ὅταν προτανεύῃ, ἀναξίως ὑπόκειται  
τῶν θείων γενῶν, ἅπερ ἀπόλυτα πάντα καὶ ἄφετα καθ' ἑαυτὰ ὑπάρχει  
καὶ τὸ κυριώτερον ποιεῖν τὰ σώματα πρὸς τὸ εἰδοποιεῖν τὰ ἑαυτῶν πρώτα  
αἴτια, | δεινὴν ἀτοπίαν ἐμφαίνει· δουλεύει γὰρ ταῦτα ἐκείνοις καὶ ὑπηρετεῖ 1  
πρὸς τὴν γένεσιν. Ἔτι οὐδὲ ἔνεστιν ἐν τοῖς σώμασι τὰ γένη τῶν κρείττο-  
νων, ἔξωθεν δ' αὐτῶν ἡγεμονεύει· οὐκ ἄρα συναλλοιοῦνται τοῖς σώμασιν.  
Ἔτι δίδωσι μὲν ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν εἰς τὰ σώματα πᾶν ὅσον δύναται δέξασθαι  
ἐκεῖνα ἀγαθόν, αὐτὰ δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν σωμάτων οὐδὲν παραδέχεται, ὥστ' οὐδ' 5  
ἀπ' αὐτῶν δέξαιτ' ἄν τινα ιδιώματα. Εἰ μὲν γὰρ ὥς ἔξεις τῶν σωμάτων  
ἢ ὥς ἔνυλα εἶδη ἢ ἄλλον τρόπον σωματοειδῆ ἦν, ἡδύνατο ἂν ἴσως καὶ  
αὐτὰ τὰς τῶν σωμάτων διαφορὰς συµμεταβάλλεσθαι· εἰ δὲ χωριστὰ ἀπὸ  
τῶν σωμάτων καὶ ἀμυγῇ καθ' ἑαυτὰ προϋπάρχει, τίς ἂν γένοιτο ἀπὸ τῶν  
σωμάτων ἐπεισιοῦσα ἐβλογος εἰς αὐτὰ διάκρισις; 10

[23].4 ἔχοντα cj. Gale: ἔχον τε VM || [24].2 ἔνεστιν ἐν M: ἔνεστιν  
ἀναγκαιῶς V ἔνεστι (ἀναγκαιῶς p. n.) V<sup>2</sup> || 3 ἔξωθεν δὲ (δὲ s. v.) M<sup>2</sup>: ἔξωθεν  
M ἔξωθεν ἐξ (sed ἐξ p. n.) V ἀλλ' ἔξωθεν (ἀλλ' i. m.) V<sup>2</sup> | ἡγεμονεύει V:  
ἡγουμενεύει M || 5 ἐκεῖνα (α ex ο) M<sup>c</sup>: ἐκεῖνο VM

Such, then, being the nature of the different properties manifesting themselves in the extreme classes, it will not be too difficult, as I said, to conceive of the intermediate properties of daemons and heroes, since they are akin to either of these extremes, both having a degree of likeness to each of the two, and yet deviating from each towards the middle, weaving together a harmonious combination commingled from both, and in turn woven together with it in suitable measures. Let such, then, be conceived to be the properties of the primary divine classes.

8 We do not, however, accept the way in which your hypothesis distinguishes them, which declares that “the cause of the distinction now being investigated is the assignment of these entities to different bodies, for example that of the gods to aetherial bodies, that of daemons to aerial ones, and that of souls to earthly bodies.” For this concept of “assignment,” as for instance the assignment of Socrates to his tribe when this is exercising its prytany,<sup>48</sup> is unworthily predicated of the divine classes, seeing as they are all absolute and autonomous in themselves. After all, to give bodies superior discretion in giving form to their own primary causes is to reveal a strange anomaly; for this would mean that these latter would be at the service of the former, and minister to them in the matter of generation. In fact, the genera of superior entities are not even present in bodies, but rule them from outside; so there is no question of their sharing in the changes to which bodies are subject. Furthermore, they give from themselves to bodies everything in the way of goodness that bodies can receive, while they themselves accept nothing from bodies, so that they would not receive from them any characteristic properties. For if in fact they were corporeal either in the way of being states of bodies, or as being enmattered forms, or in any other such way, then they could perhaps associate themselves with the various changes of bodies; but if, on the other hand, they have a prior existence separate from bodies and unmixed in themselves, what distinction could reasonably be introduced into them from bodies?

<sup>48</sup> The reference is to Socrates having to serve as president on the occasion of the trial of the generals who had command in the Battle of Arginusae. The point is that the concept of *κατάταξις* presupposes a degree of subordination to external forces not suitable to divine beings, especially gods. Porphyry has presumably used this term.

Πρὸς δὴ τούτοις πρεσβύτερα ποιεῖ τὰ σώματα τῶν θείων γενῶν  
 οὗτος ὁ λόγος, εἴπερ αὐτὰ τὴν ἔδραν παρέχει τοῖς κρείττοσιν αἰτίοις καὶ  
 τὰ κατ' οὐσίαν ἰδιώματα ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐντίθησιν. Εἰ δ' ἄρα τις καὶ λήξεις καὶ  
 [25] διανομὰς καὶ συγ|κληρώσεις συντάττει τῶν διοικούντων πρὸς τὰ διοικου- 1  
 μενα, οὗτος δῆλον ὅτι καὶ κῦρος ἀποδώσει τοῖς βελτίοσι· διότι γὰρ ἐστὶ  
 τοιαῦτα τὰ ἐφεστηκότα, διὰ τοῦτο αἰρεῖται τὴν τοιαύτην λῆξιν καὶ εἰδο-  
 ποιεῖ ταύτην καθ' ἑαυτήν, ἀλλ' οὐκ αὐτὴ πρὸς τὴν τῆς ὑποδοχῆς φύσιν  
 ἀφομοιοῦται. 5  
 Ἐπὶ μὲν οὖν τῶν ἐν μέρει, λέγω δὲ τῆς κατὰ μέρος ψυχῆς, συγχω-  
 ρεῖν δεῖ τὸ τοιοῦτον. Οἷον γὰρ προῦβαλε βίον ἢ ψυχὴν πρὶν καὶ εἰς ἀνθρώ-  
 πινον σῶμα εἰσκριθῆναι καὶ οἷον εἶδος πρόχειρον ἐποίησατο, τοιοῦτον καὶ  
 ὁργανικὸν σῶμα ἔχει πρὸς ἑαυτὴν σνηρητημένον, καὶ φύσιν παραπλησίαν  
 συνακολουθοῦσαν, ἥτις ὑποδέχεται αὐτῆς τὴν τελειότεραν ζωὴν. Ἐπὶ δὲ 10  
 τῶν κρειττόνων καὶ τῶν ὡς ὄλων περιεχόντων τὴν ἀρχήν, ἐν τοῖς κρείττο-  
 σι τὰ χεῖρονα καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀσωμάτοις τὰ σώματα καὶ ἐν τοῖς δημιουργοῦσι  
 τὰ δημιουργούμενα παράγεται, καὶ ἐν αὐτοῖς τε κύκλῳ περιέχουσι κατε-  
 [26] θύνεται, αἱ τε οὖν τῶν οὐρανίων | περιφοραὶ εἰς τὰς οὐρανίας περιφορὰς 1  
 τῆς αἰθερίας ψυχῆς ἐντεθεῖσαι τὸ πρῶτον αἰὲν ἐννέπουσι, καὶ αἱ ψυχαὶ  
 τῶν κόσμων εἰς τὸν νοῦν ἑαυτῶν ἀνήκουσαι περιέχονται ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τελείως  
 καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ πρώτως ἀπογεννῶνται· καὶ ὁ νοῦς ὃς τε μεριστὸς ὡσαύτως καὶ  
 ὁ πᾶς ἐν τοῖς κρείττοσι γένεσι συνείληπται. Ἀεὶ οὖν ἐπιστρεφόμενων τῶν 5  
 δευτέρων ἐπὶ τὰ πρῶτα καὶ τῶν ἀνωτέρων ὡς παραδειγμάτων ἐξηγου-  
 μένων τῶν ὑποδεεστέρων, ἀπὸ τῶν κρειττόνων τοῖς χείροσιν ἢ τε οὐσία  
 καὶ τὸ εἶδος παραγίγνεται, ἐν αὐτοῖς τε τοῖς βελτίοσι πρώτως παράγεται  
 τὰ ὕστερα, ὥστε ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἐφήκει καὶ ἡ τάξις καὶ τὸ μέτρον τοῖς χείροσι

[24].11 πρεσβύτερα ποιεῖ τὰ σώματα V: τοῖς τὰ σώματα M τὰ σώματα  
 κρείττω ποιεῖ (τοῖς del., κρείττω ποιεῖ s. v.) M<sup>2</sup> || [25].2 οὗτος V: καὶ οὗτος  
 M | καὶ V: om. M || 4 ἑαυτὴν... αὐτῇ] an ἑαυτά... αὐτά? || 11 ὡς V et  
 s. v. M<sup>2</sup>: om. M || 12 σώματα V: ἀσώματα M || 13 pr. τε VM (tuetur  
 Deubner p. 639) || 13-14 κατευθύνεται VM: καὶ κατευθύνεται (καὶ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>  
 || [26].4 ὃς τε (ε s. v.) M<sup>2</sup>: ὅταν VM || 6 ἀνωτέρων V: ἀνωτέρω M || 7  
 τε (ὁ p. n., ε s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: τὸ VM || 9 μέτρον cj. Gale: ἄμετρον VM εὔμετρον  
 (ἔμμετρον?) cj. Boulliau i. m. U

Moreover, this argument of yours makes bodies superior to the divine classes of being, if in fact they provide a base for the superior causes, and endow them with essential attributes. But if one were to assign allotments and roles and consortia jointly to administering elements and the administered, it is plain that this would assign the dominant role to the better elements; for in fact it is because the entities placed in command are of such a sort as they are that they have selected a given role and have bestowed a particular form from themselves,<sup>49</sup> and not because they have assimilated themselves to the nature of their receptacle.

In the case, then, of particular entities, by which I mean the individual soul, one must assent to such a conclusion as this. In accordance with the life that the soul proposed to itself even before it was enveloped in a human body, and in accordance with the form which it has made available, such also is the organic body which it has attached to it, and such is the corresponding nature accompanying it, which receives its more perfect life. But in the case of the superior classes of being and those which assume power as wholes, it is by the action of the superior beings that the inferior are produced, by the action of the incorporeal that bodies are produced, and by the action of creative forces that there are produced created objects, and they are given guidance through their all-embracing direction. So the circuits of the heavenly bodies, once initially installed in the heavenly circuits of the aetherial soul, always reside in them, and the souls of the world-orders,<sup>50</sup> once ascended to their proper intellect, are encompassed by it completely and are generated primally in it; and the intellect, in turn, the particular and the universal alike, is comprehended in the superior classes. So then, as secondary entities always revert towards their primals, and as higher beings, as models, exercise guidance over their inferiors, essence and form accrue to the worse from the better; it is precisely in the better that later entities are given their primal production, so that it is from them that there proceeds both order and measure<sup>51</sup> to the worse, and indeed

<sup>49</sup> As Des Places suggests, it seems necessary to read *ἑαυτά* and *αὐτά* here for the *ἑαυτῇ* and *αὐτῇ* of the MSS.

<sup>50</sup> The plural *κόσμοι* seems to have the Chaldaean sense of the various levels in the world-order.

<sup>51</sup> This translates a conjecture of Thomas Gale, *μέτρον* for the *ἄμετρον* of the MSS, which is meaningless in the context.

καὶ αὐτὰ ἅπερ ἐστὶν ἕκαστα, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ ἀνάπαλιν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐλαττόνων ἐπὶ 10  
τὰ προέχοντα αὐτῶν ἐπιρρεῖ τὰ ἰδιώματα.

[27] Ἀποδέδεικται μὲν οὖν διὰ τούτων ψευδῆς οὖσα ἡ τοιαύτη σωμα-  
τοειδῆς διαίρεσις. Ἔδει δέ που μάλιστα μὲν μηδὲν ὑποθέσθαι τοιοῦτον·  
εἰ δ' ἄρα σοι τοῦτο ἔδοξε, μὴ ἀξιοῦν τὸ ψεῦδος λόγον. Ἐπεὶ οὐκ εὐπορία  
τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἐλέγχων, ἀλλὰ μάτην τις ἑαυτὸν κόπτει, εἰ τὰ ψευδῆ | ὑποθέ- 1  
μενος ἀναιρεῖν ἐπιχειρεῖ ταῦτα ὡς οὐκ ἀληθῆ. Πόθεν γὰρ δὴ χωρίζεται ἡ  
ἀσώματος καθ' ἑαυτὴν οὐσία τοῖς ποιοῖς σώμασιν, ἡ μηδὲν ἔχουσα κοι-  
νὸν πρὸς τὰ μετέχοντα αὐτῆς σώματα; πῶς δὲ δὴ ἡ μὴ τοπικῶς παρούσα  
τοῖς σώμασι τοῖς σωματικοῖς τόποις διακρίνεται, καὶ ἡ μὴ διειργομένη 5  
μερισταῖς περιγραφαῖς ὑποκειμένων κατέχεται μεριστῶς ὑπὸ τῶν μερῶν  
τοῦ κόσμου; τί δὲ δὴ καὶ τὸ διακωλύόν ἐστι τοὺς θεοὺς προῖεναι παν-  
ταχοῦ καὶ τὸ ἀνεῖργον αὐτῶν τὴν δύναμιν ὥστε ἰέναι μέχρι τῆς οὐρανίας  
ἀψίδος; ἰσχυροτέρας γὰρ ἂν εἴη τοῦτο αἰτίας ἔργον, τῆς κατακλειούσης  
αὐτοὺς καὶ περιγραφούσης ἔν τισι μέρεσιν. Καὶ τὸ μὲν ὄντως ὄν καὶ καθ' 10  
ἑαυτὸ ἀσώματος πανταχοῦ ἐστὶν ὅπουπερ ἂν βούληται, τὸ δὲ θεῖον καὶ  
πάντα ὑπερέχον, εἰ ὑπερέχεται ὑπὸ τῆς τοῦ ὅλου κόσμου τελειότητος καὶ  
ὡς ἐν μέρει τινὶ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ περιείληπται, ἐλαττοῦται ἄρα καὶ τοῦ κατὰ  
[28] τὸ σῶμα μεγέθους. | Οὐχ ὁρῶ δὲ ἔγωγε καὶ τίνα τρόπον δημιουργεῖται 1  
τὰ τῆδε καὶ εἰδοποιεῖται, εἴ γε μηδεμία θεία δημιουργία καὶ τῶν θεῶν  
εἰδῶν μετουσία διατείνει διὰ παντὸς τοῦ κόσμου.

Ὅλως δὲ τῆς ἱερᾶς ἀγιστείας καὶ τῆς θεουργικῆς κοινωνίας θεῶν  
πρὸς ἀνθρώπους ἀναίρεσίς ἐστιν αὕτη ἡ δόξα, τὴν τῶν κρείττωνων παρ- 5  
ουσίαν ἔξω τῆς γῆς ἐξορίζουσα. Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλλο λέγει ἢ ὅτι ἀπώκισται  
τῶν περὶ γῆν τὰ θεῖα καὶ ὅτι ἀνθρώποις οὐ συμμίσγνται καὶ ὡς ἐρημος  
αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ὁ τῆδε τόπος· οὐδ' ἡμεῖς οὖν οἱ ἱερεῖς οὐδὲν παρὰ τῶν θεῶν

[27].8 ἰέναι s. v. M<sup>2</sup>: εἶναι VM || 9 αἰτίας V: om. M || 10 αὐτοὺς  
V: αὐτάς M || 11 ἐστὶν V: εἰσὶν M εἴσιν s. v. M<sup>2</sup> || 12 εἰ add. cj. i. m. B<sup>5</sup>  
| ὑπερέχεται VM: περιέχεται cj. i. m. B<sup>5</sup> | ὅλου κόσμου V: κόσμου ὅλου M  
|| 13 ἐν M: om. V || [28].6 ὅτι s. v. M<sup>2</sup>: ὅταν VM || 7 ἀνθρώποις V et  
(οἱς s. v.) M<sup>c</sup>: ἀνθρώπους M

their very individuality, but it is not the other way around, that characteristic properties flow from inferior entities to those that preside over them.

So then, in this way, any such distinction according to types of body is shown to be false. It would have been preferable to have proposed no such hypothesis; but if that was your decision, at least you should not have deemed falsehood worthy of expression. For there is no abundance of proofs here, but one belabours oneself to no purpose if, by means of false hypotheses, one attempts to dismiss these principles as not true. What, after all, would cause being, which is essentially incorporeal, and has nothing in common with the bodies participating in it, to be divided among qualitatively distinct bodies? And how would that which is not locally present to bodies be distinguished by bodily locations, and that which is not constricted by the particular circumscriptions of subjects be contained individually by the various parts of the cosmos? And, indeed, what is it that prevents the gods from proceeding in any direction, and hinders their power from going further than the vault of heaven? For that, after all, would be the function of a more powerful cause, such as would restrict and enclose them in certain parts (of the cosmos). In fact, the truly real, and that which is essentially incorporeal, is everywhere that it wishes to be; indeed, if the divine, which surpasses everything, is to be itself surpassed by the perfection of the whole cosmos, and circumscribed by it in a certain part, then it is diminished in comparison with corporeal magnitude. As for me, I do not see in what way the things of this realm are fashioned and given form, if no divine creative force or participation in the divine forms extends throughout the whole of the cosmos.

And indeed, speaking generally, this doctrine constitutes the ruination of sacred ritual and theurgical communion of gods with men, by banishing the presence of the higher classes of being outside the confines of the earth. For it amounts to nothing else but saying that the divine is set apart from the earthly realm, and that it does not mingle with humanity,<sup>52</sup> and that this realm is bereft of divinity; and it follows, according to this reasoning, that not

<sup>52</sup> This is a curious reminiscence of Plato's statement in the *Symposium* 203a1–2: θεὸς δὲ ἀνθρώπων οὐ μίγνυται. Is Iamblichus really intending to challenge this Platonic principle?

μεμαθήκαμεν κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν λόγον, οὐδὲ σὺ ὀρθῶς ἡμᾶς ἐρωτᾷς ὥς  
εἰδότας τι περιττότερον, εἴπερ μηδὲν τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων διαφέρομεν. 10

Ἄλλ' οὐδὲν ἐστὶ τούτων ὑγιές· οὔτε γὰρ οἱ θεοὶ κρατοῦνται ἐν τισὶ  
τοῦ κόσμου μέρεσιν, οὔτε τὰ περὶ γῆν ἄμοιρα αὐτῶν καθέστηκεν. Ἄλλ' οἱ  
μὲν κρείττονες ἐν αὐτῷ, ὥς ὑπὸ μηδενὸς περιέχονται, περιέχουσι πάντα  
[29] ἐν ἑαυτοῖς· τὰ δ' ἐπὶ γῆς ἐν τοῖς πληρώμασι τῶν θεῶν | ἔχοντα τὸ εἶναι, 1  
ὁπόταν ἐπιτήδεια πρὸς τὴν θείαν μετοχὴν γένηται, εὐθὺς ἔχει πρὸ τῆς  
οἰκειᾶς ἑαυτῶν οὐσίας προὑπάρχοντας ἐν αὐτῇ τοὺς θεούς.

Ὅτι μὲν οὖν ἡ ὅλη διαίρεσις αὕτη ψευδής ἐστὶ καὶ ἡ ἔφοδος ἐπὶ  
τὴν τῶν ιδιωμάτων θήραν παράλογος καὶ τὸ διοικίζειν ἐν τινὶ τόπῳ τοὺς 5  
θεοὺς οὐκ ἀντιλαμβάνεται τῆς ὅλης ἐν αὐτοῖς οὐσίας καὶ δυνάμεως, διὰ  
τούτων παρεστήσαμεν. Ἦν μὲν οὖν ἄξιον παραλιπεῖν τὴν ἐξέτασιν τῶν  
ὑπὸ σοῦ πρὸς ταύτην τὴν διανομὴν τῶν κρείττονων ἀντειρημένων, ὥς  
οὐδὲν πρὸς ἔπος τοῖς ἀληθέσι νοήμασιν ἀντιλέγουσαν· ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ δεῖ τοῦ  
λόγου στοχάζεσθαι μᾶλλον καὶ τῆς θείας ἐπιστήμης, ἀλλὰ μὴ πρὸς ἄνδρα 10  
διαλέγεσθαι, καὶ ἡμεῖς διὰ τοῦτο ἐναρμόζομεν τὴν ἀπηρτημένην ἀμφισ-  
βήτησιν πρὸς εὐλογόν τινα καὶ θεολογικὴν ἀντίληψιν.

9 Τίθημι δὴ οὖν ἐρωτῶντά σε οὐκ ἐκεῖνο τὸ ἀπόρημα, διὰ τί,  
ἐν οὐρανῷ κατοικοῦντων τῶν θεῶν μόνως, χθονίων καὶ ὑποχθονίων εἰσὶ  
[30] παρὰ τοῖς θεουργικοῖς κλή|σεις· οὐδὲ γάρ ἐστιν ἀληθὲς τὸ ἐν ἀρχῇ, ὥς 1  
κατ' οὐρανὸν μόνον οἱ θεοὶ περιπολοῦσι· πάντα γὰρ αὐτῶν ἐστὶ πλήρη·

[28].10 μηδὲν (α p. n.) M<sup>c</sup>: μηδένα M μηδένα<sup>πo</sup> (sc. μηδὲν ἀπὸ) V ||

[29].6 αὐτοῖς (οἱς s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: αὐτῇ VM || 7 παρεστήσαμεν V: παραστήσωμεν  
M || 8 ἀντειρημένων V: ἀντειρημένην M || 13 οὐκ scripsi: οὐ VM οὐ cj.  
Gale | ἐκεῖνο scripsi: κακεῖνο VM || [30].1 ἀρχῇ M: ἀρχῶν V

even we priests would have learned anything from the gods, and that you are wrong to interrogate us as if we had some special degree of knowledge, if in fact we differ in no way from other mortals.

But in fact none of this is valid. For neither is it the case that the gods are confined to certain parts of the cosmos, nor is the earthly realm devoid of them. On the contrary, it is true of the superior beings in it that, even as they are not contained by anything, so they contain everything within themselves; and earthly things, possessing their being in virtue of the totalities<sup>53</sup> of the gods, whenever they come to be ready for participation in the divine, straight away find the gods pre-existing in it prior to their own proper essence.

So then, we have established on the basis of these considerations that this whole method of division is false, and this effort to ferret out distinctive properties<sup>54</sup> is absurd, and the confining of the gods to a particular location does not properly reflect the totality of their essence or potency. It would have been right, therefore, to leave aside altogether the examination of your objections to this distribution of roles among the superior classes of being, on the grounds that it provides no substantial challenge to true conceptions on the subject; but because one must give thought rather to the demands of reasoning and divine science, and not argue *ad hominem*, we on our part propose for this reason to accommodate this misguided disputation to a rational and theologically sound perspective.

9 I propose, therefore, to assume that you are not asking the question, “Why, seeing that the gods dwell solely in the heavens, do theurgists invoke terrestrial and subterranean beings?” because your initial hypothesis here is unsound, to the effect that the gods go about only in the heavens. In fact, of course, “all

<sup>53</sup> The term *πλήρωμα* is one proper originally to Gnostic circles (also favoured in the Pauline corpus, e.g., Rom 11:12; Eph 3:9; Col 2:9), and seems to occur here for the first time in Neoplatonic authors. What the precise significance of the plural is here is not clear, but one might extrapolate backwards from such a passage of Proclus as *ET* prop. 177, where it is laid down that “every *νοῦς* is a *πλήρωμα* of forms.”

<sup>54</sup> That is, of the various classes of divine being.



ἀλλὰ πῶς ἐνύδριοί τινες λέγονται καὶ ἀέριοι, τόπους τε διειλήχασιν ἄλλοι ἄλλους, καὶ σωμάτων μοίρας διεκκληρώσαντο κατὰ περιγραφὴν, καίτοι δύνανται ἄπειρον ἔχοντες καὶ ἀμέριστον καὶ ἀπερίληπτον, πῶς τε αὐτῶν 5 ἔσται ἡ ἔνωσις πρὸς ἀλλήλους, μερῶν μερισταῖς περιγραφαῖς διειργομένων, καὶ καθ' ἑτερότητα τῶν τόπων καὶ τῶν ὑποκειμένων σωμάτων διειλημμένων.

Πάντων δὴ οὖν τούτων καὶ ἄλλων παραπλησίων ἀπεράντων ζητημάτων μία ἀρίστη λύσις, κατιδεῖν τὸν τρόπον τῆς θείας λήξεως. Αὕτη 10 τοίνυν ἐάν τε μοίρας τινὰς τοῦ παντός, οἷον οὐρανὸν ἢ γῆν, ἐάν τε πόλεις ἱερὰς καὶ χώρας, ἐάν τε καὶ τεμένη τινὰ ἢ ἱερὰ ἀγάλματα διαλαγχάνη, πάντα ἔξωθεν ἐπιλάμπει, καθάπερ ὁ ἥλιος ἔξωθεν φωτίζει πάντα ταῖς ἀκτῖσιν. Ὡςπερ οὖν τὸ φῶς περιέχει τὰ φωτιζόμενα, οὕτως καὶ τῶν θεῶν ἡ δύναμις τὰ μεταλαμβάνοντα αὐτῆς ἔξωθεν περιείληφεν. Καὶ 15 ὥςπερ ἀμιγῶς | πάρεστι τῷ ἀέρι τὸ φῶς (δῆλον δ' ἐκ τοῦ μηδὲν ἐν αὐτῷ 1 καταλείπεσθαι φῶς ἐπειδὴν ἅπαξ τὸ ἐλλάμπον ἀναχωρήσῃ, καίτοι θερμότητος αὐτῷ παρουσίας ἐπειδὴν τὸ θερμαῖνον ἐκποδὼν ἀπέλθῃ), οὕτω καὶ τῶν θεῶν τὸ φῶς ἐλλάμπει χωριστῶς ἐν αὐτῷ τε μονίμως ἰδρυμένον προχωρεῖ διὰ τῶν ὄντων ὅλων. Καὶ μὴν τό γε φῶς τὸ δρώμενον ἐν ἔστι 5 συνεχές, πανταχοῦ τὸ αὐτὸ ὅλον, ὥστε μὴ οἶόν τε εἶναι χωρὶς ἀποτεμεσθαι τι αὐτοῦ μόριον μηδὲ κύκλῳ περιλαβεῖν μηδὲ ἀποστήσai ποτε τοῦ παρέχοντος τὸ φῶς.

Κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ δὴ οὖν καὶ ὁ σύμπας κόσμος μεριστὸς ὢν περὶ τὸ ἐν καὶ ἀμέριστον τῶν θεῶν φῶς διαιρεῖται. Τὸ δ' ἔστιν ἐν καὶ αὐτὸ παν- 10 ταχοῦ ὅλως, ἀμερίστως τε πάρεστι πᾶσι τοῖς δυναμένοις αὐτοῦ μετέχειν,

[30].6 ἔσται M: ἐστιν V || [31].4 αὐτῷ ] αὐτῷ VM || 5 ἐν ἔστι M: ἔνεστι V || 10 καὶ<sup>1</sup> V: καὶ τὸ M || 11 ὅλως V: ὅλον M

things are full of gods.”<sup>55</sup> I prefer to take it that you are asking this: “how comes it that some divinities are termed ‘aquatic’ and ‘aerial,’ different ones being allotted to different locations, and circumscribed within distinct types of bodily substance, whereas in fact they possess a potency which is unlimited and undivided and uncircumscribed; and further, how will their mutual unity be preserved, if they are separated off in particular circumscribed areas, and distinguished by virtue of the differentiation of their locations and the bodies which serve as their substrata?”

To all these problems, and an infinite number of others like them, the single best solution is to examine closely the mode of allotment of roles among the gods. So then, whether we are talking about the assignment of regions of the universe, such as heaven or earth, or of cities or localities consecrated (to one deity or another), or even of precincts or sacred statues,<sup>56</sup> the fact is that divinity illumines everything from without, even as the sun lights everything from without with its rays. Even as the sunlight, then, envelops what it illuminates, so also does the power of the gods embrace from outside that which participates in it. And similarly, even as the light is present in the air without blending with it (this is clear from the fact that no light is left in it when once the light-producing element has been withdrawn,<sup>57</sup> whereas a body retains heat after the withdrawal of the heating element), even so the light of the gods illuminates its subject transcendentally, and is fixed steadfastly in itself even as it proceeds throughout the totality of existence. Even visible light, after all, is a continuum, everywhere the same throughout, so that it is not possible to cut off any part of it, nor to circumscribe it round about, nor to detach it ever from its source.

On the same principle, then, the world as a whole, spatially divided as it is, brings about division throughout itself of the single, indivisible light of the gods. This light is one and the same in its entirety everywhere, is present indivisibly to all things that

<sup>55</sup> This does, as Des Places suggests, seem to be an intentional reminiscence of the famous dictum of Thales, as quoted by Aristotle, *De an.* 1.5.411a8 and Plato, *Leg.* 10.899b9.

<sup>56</sup> For more discussion of such allocations, see below V.23–24.

<sup>57</sup> For this light-imagery, and for the theory of the nature of light which lies behind it, we may compare certain key passages of Plotinus, esp. *Enn.* 4.5.6–7, but also 1.6.3.18–19 and 2.1.7.26–30. See Finamore (1993).

παντελεῖ τε δυνάμει πεπλήρωκε πάντα, καὶ ἀπείρω δὴ τινι τῇ κατὰ αἰτίαν  
 ὑπεροχῇ συμπεραίνει τὰ ὅλα ἐν αὐτῷ, συνήνωται τε πανταχοῦ πρὸς ἑαν-  
 τὸ καὶ τὰ τέλη ταῖς ἀρχαῖς συνάπτει· ὅπερ δὴ καὶ ὁ σύμπας μιμούμενος  
 [32] οὐρανὸς καὶ κόσμος τὴν ἐγκύκλιον περιφορὰν περιπολεῖ, συνήνωται | τε 1  
 πρὸς ἑαυτόν, καὶ τὰ στοιχεῖα κατὰ κύκλον περιδινούμενα ποδηγεῖ, πάντα  
 τε ἐν ἀλλήλοις ὄντα καὶ πρὸς ἄλληλα φερόμενα συνέχει, μέτροις τε τοῖς  
 ἴσοις ἀφορίζει καὶ τὰ πορρωτάτω διωκισμένα, καὶ τὰς τελευτὰς ταῖς ἀρ-  
 χαῖς οἷον γῆν οὐρανῷ συγκεῖσθαι ποιεῖ, μίαν τε συνέχειαν καὶ ὁμολογίαν 5  
 τῶν ὅλων πρὸς ὅλα ἀπεργάζεται.

Τὸ δὴ τῶν θεῶν ἐμφανές τις ἄγαλμα καθορῶν οὕτως ἡνωμένον ἄρ'  
 οὐκ ἂν αἰδεσθείη περὶ θεῶν τῶν αἰτίων αὐτοῦ δόξαν ἔχων ἀλλοίαν, τομάς  
 τε ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἀποδιαλήψεις παρεισάγων σωματοειδεῖς τε περιγραφάς;  
 ἐγὼ μὲν οἶομαι πάνθ' ὄντινον οὕτως διатеθῆναι· εἰ γὰρ οὐδεὶς ἐστι λό- 10  
 γος οὐδὲ σχέσις συμμετρίας οὐδὲ οὐσίας τις κοινωνία οὐδὲ κατὰ δύναμιν  
 ἢ τινα ἐνέργειαν συμπλοκὴ πρὸς τὸ διακοσμοῦν τοῦ διακοσμουμένου, ὥς  
 τὸ μηδέν, ἵνα οὕτως εἴπω, κεῖται ἐν αὐτῷ οὔτε παρατάσεώς τιнос κατὰ  
 διάστασιν οὔτε τοπικῆς περιοχῆς οὔτε ἀποδιαλήψεως μεριστῆς οὔτε ἄλ- 15  
 λης τοιαύτης ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ τῶν θεῶν ἐμφυομένης παρισώσεως. Πρὸς 15  
 [33] μὲν γὰρ τὰ | ὁμοφυῇ κατ' οὐσίαν ἢ δύναμιν ἢ καὶ ὁμοειδῇ πως ὄντα ἢ καὶ 1  
 ὁμογενῇ δύναται τις περιλήψις ἢ διακράτησις ἐπινοεῖσθαι· ὅσα δ' ἐστὶν  
 ἐξηρημένα τοῖς ὅλοις παντελῶς, τίς ἂν ἐπὶ τούτων ἀντιπερίστασις ἢ δι'  
 ὅλων διέξοδος ἢ μεριστὴ περιγραφὴ ἢ κατὰ τόπον περιοχὴ ἢ τι τῶν τοιού-  
 των ἐπινοηθείη ποτ' ἂν ἐν δίκῃ; ἀλλ' οἶμαι τὰ μετέχοντά ἐστιν ἕκαστα 5  
 τοιαῦτα, ὥς τὰ μὲν αἰθερώως τὰ δ' ἀερίως τὰ δ' ἐνυδρίως αὐτῶν μετέχει· ἃ  
 δὴ κατιδοῦσα καὶ ἡ τῶν ἔργων τέχνη χρῆται ταῖς οἰκειώσεσι καὶ κλήσεσι

[31].13 αὐτῷ VM || [32].7 τις V et (σ s. v.) M<sup>2</sup>: τι M || 13  
 τὸ VM: τε (o p. n., ε s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 14 ἀποδιαλήψεως M: ἀπὸ διαλήψεως V ||  
 [33].3 ἀντιπερίστασις cj. R: ἀντιπαράστασις VM ἀντιπεριστάσεις cj. U || 6  
 μετέχει VM: μετέχειν (v s. v.) M<sup>2</sup>

are capable of participating in it, and has filled everything with its perfect power; by virtue of its unlimited causal superiority it brings to completion all things within itself, and, while remaining everywhere united to itself, brings together extremities with starting-points. It is, indeed, in imitation of it that the whole heaven and cosmos performs its circular revolution, is united with itself, and leads the elements round in their cyclic dance, holds together all things as they rest within each other or are borne towards each other, defines by equal measures even the most far-flung objects, causes lasts to be joined to firsts, as for example earth to heaven, and produces a single continuity and harmony of all with all.

Beholding the visible image of the gods thus in its unified state, would not one feel ashamed to hold about the gods, the authors of all this, a doctrine inappropriate to them, introducing into one's account of them divisions and breaks in continuity and circumscriptions more proper to corporeal entities? I certainly think that anyone whatsoever would be so disposed. For if there is no ratio,<sup>58</sup> no relation of symmetry, nor community of essence, nor interweaving in either potency or act exercised by the ordering element upon the ordered, this latter lies within it, so to speak, as a nothingness, without any spatial distension or local encompassing or division into parts or any other form of assimilation being engendered by the presence of the gods. In respect of entities which are homogeneous in essence or potency, or indeed of the same species or genus, it is possible to conceive of some type of encompassing or direct control; but with regard to such beings as are completely and in all respects transcendent, how in this case can one properly conceive of any reciprocal interchange, or total interpenetration, or circumscription of individuals, or encompassing of localities, or anything of the sort? It is my view, then, that the participants (in divine influences) are in each case of such a nature that they participate in them either through the medium of aether or of air, or yet of water; and it is by observing this that the art of (divine) works<sup>59</sup> makes use of correspondences<sup>60</sup> and

<sup>58</sup> We adopt Thomas Taylor's rendering of *λόγος* here.

<sup>59</sup> Namely, theurgy.

<sup>60</sup> That is to say, the system of chains of connection between various parts of the universe.

κατὰ τὴν τοιαύτην διαίρεσιν καὶ οἰκειότητα.

10 **10** Καὶ περὶ μὲν τῆς εἰς τὸν κόσμον διανομῆς τῶν κρειπτόνων γεν-  
νῶν τοσαῦτα εἰρήσθω· μετὰ δὲ ταύτην αὐθις ὑποτείνας σαντῶ διαίρεσιν  
ἐτέραν, τῇ τοῦ ἐμπαθοῦς καὶ ἀπαθοῦς διαφορᾷ χωρίζεις τῶν κρειπτόνων  
τὰς οὐσίας. Ἐγὼ δὲ οὐδὲ ταύτην δέχομαι τὴν διαίρεσιν. Οὐδ' ὅτιοῦν γὰρ  
τῶν κρειπτόνων γενῶν ἐστὶν ἐμπαθὲς οὐδ' ἀπαθὲς οὕτως ὡς ἀντιδια-  
[34] ρούμενον πρὸς τὸ παθητὸν οὐδ' ὡς πε|φνκὸς μὲν δέχεσθαι τὰ πάθη, δι' 1  
ἄρετὴν δ' αὐτῶν ἢ τινα ἄλλην σπουδαίαν κατὰστασιν ἀπολελυμένον. Ἄλλ'  
ὅτι παντελῶς ἐξήρηται τῆς ἐναντιώσεως τοῦ πάσχειν ἢ μὴ πάσχειν, καὶ  
ὅτι οὐδὲ πέφνκεν ὅλως πάσχειν, καὶ ὅτι κατ' οὐσίαν ἔχει τὴν ἄτρεπτον  
στερεότητα, κατὰ τοῦτο ἐν ὅλοις αὐτοῖς τίθεμαι τὸ ἀπαθὲς καὶ ἄτρεπτον. 5

Ἴδε γὰρ εἰ βούλει τὸ ἔσχατον τῶν θείων, τὴν καθαρὰν τῶν σωμα-  
των ψυχὴν· τί δεῖται αὕτη τῆς ἐν τῇ ἡδονῇ γενέσεως ἢ τῆς ἐν αὐτῇ εἰς  
φύσιν ἀποκαταστάσεως, ὑπερφνὲς οὐσα καὶ τὴν ἀγέννητον ζωὴν διαζῶ-  
σα; τί δὲ τῆς εἰς φθορὰν ἀγούσης λύπης ἢ διαλυούσης τὴν τοῦ σώματος  
ἁρμονίαν μετέχει, σώματος οὐσα παντὸς ἐκτὸς καὶ τῆς περὶ τὸ σῶμα με- 10  
ριζομένης φύσεως, τῆς τε κατιούσης ἀπὸ τῆς ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ ἁρμονίας εἰς  
τὸ σῶμα παντάπασιν οὐσα χωριστή; ἀλλ' οὐδὲ τῶν προηγουμένων τῆς

[33].8 καὶ i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: om. VM || 12 ὅτιοῦν (pr. v eraso) M<sup>c</sup>: ὅτινοῦν VM  
|| [34].2 σπουδαίαν κατὰστασιν V: κατὰστασιν σπουδαίαν M

invocations which have regard to such a system of divisions and relationships.

10 So much, then, for the question of the assignment of the superior classes of being to the various parts of the cosmos. Next, however, you propose for yourself another division, and make a distinction according to "the differentiation of the superior classes in relation to passibility and impassibility." However, I do not accept this division either. For in fact none of the superior classes is subject to passions, nor yet is it free from passions in the sense of being contrary to what is passible, nor as being of a nature subject to passion, but being freed from this through its moral excellence or some other good disposition.<sup>61</sup> It is rather because they completely transcend the distinction between passible and impassible, because they do not even possess a nature that is susceptible to passion, and because they are endowed by their essence with inflexible firmness, that I postulate impassibility and inflexibility in respect to all of them.

Consider, if you will, the least of divine beings, the soul pure from contact with body. What need does it have of the generative aspect of pleasure, or of the "return to the natural state" that pleasure induces,<sup>62</sup> seeing that it is something supernatural, and living a life not subject to generation? And what could be its participation in that pain which leads to destruction or brings about the dissolution of the harmony of the body, when it is external to all body and to that nature which is divided about body,<sup>63</sup> and is completely separated from that which descends from the harmony in the soul into bodies? It does not even have need of the

<sup>61</sup> "Abamon" here uses an argument of some subtlety, denying the relevance to a subject of a given characterisation, if this characterisation is not meaningfully negatable. One cannot properly, he asserts, describe a divinity as ἀπαθής unless it were of such a nature as to be potentially ἐμπαθής. This principle, not unlike the "verifiability principle" of Logical Positivism, is actually a criticism, not just of Porphyry, but of Greek theologising in general.

<sup>62</sup> This seems to be a reference to the theory of pleasure as a restoration of an organism to its natural state enunciated by Plato at *Philebus* 31d, but possibly also to Epicurus's theory of "catastematic" pleasure, cf. frg. 416-428 Usener. The description of pain just below as a dissolution of the harmony of the body is also derivable from this passage of the *Philebus*.

<sup>63</sup> A reference to the "being which is divided about bodies" of *Timaeus* 35a.

αἰσθησεως παθημάτων προσδεῖται, οὐδὲ γὰρ ὅλως ἐν σώματι κατέχεται,  
 [35] οὐδὲ περιειργομένη που δεῖται δι' ὀργάνων | σωματικῶν ἑτέρων τινῶν σω- 1  
 μάτων ἐκτὸς ὄντων ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι· ὅλως δὲ ἀμέριστος οὔσα καὶ ἐν ἐνὶ  
 εἵδει μένουσα τῷ αὐτῷ, καθ' αὐτήν τε ἀσώματος ὑπάρχουσα καὶ μηδὲν  
 ἐπικοινωνοῦσα πρὸς τὸ γιγνόμενον καὶ πάσχον σῶμα, οὔτ' ἂν κατὰ διαί-  
 ρεσιν οὔτε κατ' ἀλλοιώσιν τι πάθοι, οὔθ' ὅλως ἔχοι οὐδ' ὅτιοῦν τροπῆς ἢ 5  
 πάθους ἐχόμενον.

Ἄλλ' οὐδ' ὅταν εἰς τὸ σῶμά ποτε παραγένηται, οὔτε αὐτὴ πάσχει  
 οὔτε οἱ λόγοι οὕς δίδωσι τῷ σώματι· εἶδη γάρ εἰσι καὶ οὔτοι ἀπλοῖ καὶ  
 μονοειδεῖς, ταραχὴν οὐδεμίαν οὐδ' ἔκστασιν ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν εἰσδεχόμενοι. Αἰ-  
 τία δὴ οὗν τὸ λοιπὸν γίγνεται τῷ συνθέτῳ τοῦ πάσχειν· τὸ δ' αἷτιον οὐκ 10  
 ἔστι δὴπον τὸ αὐτὸ ὅπερ τὸ ἀποτελούμενον. Ὡςπερ οὖν γιγνομένων τε  
 καὶ φθειρομένων τῶν συνθέτων ζώων γένεσις οὔσα πρώτη ἢ ψυχὴ αὐ-  
 τῇ καθ' ἑαυτήν ἐστὶν ἀγέννητος καὶ ἀφθαρτος, οὔτω καὶ πασχόντων τῶν  
 μετεχόντων τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ μὴ καθόλου ἐχόντων τὸ ζῆν καὶ τὸ εἶναι, συμ-  
 [36] πλακέντων δὲ πρὸς τὸ ἀόριστον καὶ | τὴν ἑτερότητα τῆς ὕλης, αὐτὴ καθ' 1  
 ἑαυτήν ἐστὶν ἄτρεπτος, ὡς κρείττων οὔσα κατ' οὐσίαν τοῦ πάσχειν, ἀλλ'  
 οὐχ ὡς ἐν προαιρέσει τινὶ τῇ ῥεπούσῃ πρὸς ἀμφοτέρω τὸ ἐμπαθές, οὐδ'  
 ὡς ἐν μετουσίᾳ ἕξεως ἢ δυνάμεως προσλαβοῦσα ἐπικτήτων τὸ ἄτρεπτον.

[35].10 συνθέτῳ M: συνθέτως V || 14 καθ' ὅλου VM: καθ' ὅλον (v ex  
 u, o repet. s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || [36].3 ἐμπαθές VM: ἀπαθές (ἐμ p. n., ἀ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> (ἀπαθές  
 καὶ τὸ) ἐμπαθές cj. Sodano

experiences which control sense-perception, for it is not at all confined within a body, and not being constrained in any way it has no need of exercising perception by means of corporeal organs upon any other bodies situated outside itself; and in general, being indivisible and remaining in one selfsame form, being in its essence incorporeal and having no communication with the body that comes into being and suffers, it would not undergo any experience either through division or through modification, nor would it have any element in it that depended upon change or passion.

But even when it eventually arrives in the body, not even then does it itself suffer, nor yet do the reason-principles which it imparts to the body;<sup>64</sup> for these, too, are forms and simple and uniform, admitting no disturbance nor displacement from their proper state. It is the soul, then, in the last analysis, which becomes for the composite<sup>65</sup> the cause of its experiencing passions; and the cause, certainly, is not the same thing as the effect. Even as, then, composite living beings come into existence and are destroyed, the soul, which is their primary cause of generation, is in its essence ungenerated and indestructible, so also, while what participates in soul and does not possess life and being to an absolute degree, but is enmeshed in the indefiniteness and otherness of matter, is subject to suffering, the soul in itself is unchangeable, as being superior in its essence to passion—not owing its impassivity<sup>66</sup> to any mental attitude<sup>67</sup> which might incline in either direction, nor through participation in any state or potency taking on an unchangeability, which is merely adventitious.

<sup>64</sup> The first part of this statement is in accord with the doctrine of Plotinus on the impassivity of the soul proper (cf. in particular *Enn.* 3.6.1–5), but the assertion that even the λόγοι of soul in body are impassible goes rather further than Plotinus would wish to go, at least as regards terminology. Plotinus would agree that nothing that was a form could be subject to passions, but he recognised a sort of emanation or “trace” of soul in body, which makes up the composite which is the living body.

<sup>65</sup> σύνθετον, sc. of soul (or at least life-principle) and body.

<sup>66</sup> Despite Des Places’s demurral, and following Hopfner, it seems necessary to the argument to read ἀπαθής here for the ἐμπαθής of V and M, though the presence of ἐμπαθής in the best MSS is certainly embarrassing. The point seems to be the same as that made above, that the soul is not impassible in any sense which might imply that it could conceivably be subject to passions.

<sup>67</sup> Rendering thus προαίρεσις. On the meaning of this term in later Greek philosophy, see Rist (1974).



Ὅποτε δὴ οὖν ἐπὶ τοῦ ἐσχάτου γένους τῶν κρειπτόνων, ὥσπερ τῆς 5  
 ψυχῆς, ἀδύνατον ἐπεδείξαμεν τὴν μετουσίαν τοῦ πάσχειν, τί χρὴ δαίμο-  
 σι καὶ ἥρωσιν αὐτὴν προσάπτειν, ὅλπερ αἰδίοι τέ εἰσι καὶ συνοπαδοὶ τῶν  
 θεῶν διὰ παντός, εἰκόνα τε τῆς διακοσμήσεως τῶν θεῶν καὶ αὐτοὶ κατὰ  
 τὰ αὐτὰ διαφυλάττουσιν, ἐχόμενοί τε αἰεὶ διατελοῦσι τῆς θείας τάξεως  
 καὶ οὐδέποτε αὐτὴν ἀπολείπουσιν; ἴσμεν γὰρ δῆπον τοῦτο, ὥς τὸ πάθος 10  
 ἄτακτόν τέ ἐστι καὶ πλημμελὲς καὶ ἀστάθμητον, ἑαυτοῦ μὲν οὐδαμῶς ὄν,  
 ἐκείνῳ δὲ προσκείμενον ὅφ' οὗ κατέχεται καὶ ὃ δουλεύει πρὸς τὴν γένεσιν·  
 τοῦτο δὴ οὖν ἄλλῳ τινὶ γένει προσήκει μᾶλλον ἢ τῷ αἰεὶ καὶ συνηρημένῳ  
 [37] τοῖς θεοῖς, τάξιν τε τὴν αὐτὴν καὶ περίοδον μετ' αὐτῶν περριόντι. Ἀπα- 1  
 θεῖς τοίνυν εἰσὶ καὶ οἱ δαίμονες καὶ πάντα τὰ συνεπόμενα αὐτοῖς τῶν  
 κρειπτόνων γενῶν.

**11** Πῶς οὖν πρὸς ἐμπαθεῖς αὐτοὺς πολλὰ δρᾶται ἐν ταῖς ἱερουρ-  
 γίαις; φημὶ δὴ οὖν καὶ τοῦτο ἀπείρως λέγεσθαι τῆς ἱερατικῆς μυσταγω- 5  
 γίας. Τῶν γὰρ ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς ἐκάστοτε ἐπιτελουμένων τὰ μὲν ἀπόρρητόν  
 τινα καὶ κρείττονα λόγον τὴν αἰτίαν ἔχει· τὰ δ' ὥς σύμβολα καθιέρωται ἐξ  
 αἰδίου τοῖς κρείττοσι· τὰ δ' εἰκόνα τινὰ ἄλλην ἀποσώζει, καθάπερ δὴ καὶ  
 ἡ γενεσιουργὸς φύσις τῶν ἀφανῶν λόγων ἐμφανεῖς τινὰς μορφὰς ἀπετυ-  
 πώσατο· τὰ δὲ τιμῆς ἔνεκα προσάγεται ἢ ἀφομοιώσεως ὁποιασοῦν ἢ καὶ 10  
 οἰκειώσεως στοχάζεται· ἔνια δὲ τὸ ἡμῖν χρήσιμον παρασκευάζει ἢ καθ-  
 αίρει πῶς καὶ ἀπολύει τὰ ἡμέτερα τῶν ἀνθρώπων πάθη, ἢ ἄλλο τι τῶν  
 ἡμῖν συμβαινόντων δεινῶν ἀποτρέπεται. Οὐ μὴν ἔτι γε συγχωρήσειεν ἄν  
 τις ὥς ἄρα πρὸς ἐμπαθεῖς τοὺς θεραπευομένους θεοὺς ἢ δαίμονας μέρος  
 τι τῆς ἀγιστείας προσφέρεται· οὔτε γὰρ πέφνκεν εἰσδέχεσθαι τινα ἀπὸ 15  
 τῶν σωμάτων μεταβολὴν ἢ καθ' αὐτὴν αἰδίου καὶ ἀσώματος οὐσίας.

Since, then, we have shown in the case of the lowest class of the superior beings, that is, the soul, that it is impossible that it have any part in experiencing passion, how can one attribute any such participation to daemons and heroes, who are eternal, and constantly in attendance upon the gods, and who themselves preserve, on the same terms, an image of the administration of the gods, do not cease to maintain the divine order, and never depart from it? For we know, I presume, that passion is something disordered and defective and unstable, never being its own master, but dependent upon that by which it is controlled and to which it is enslaved for purposes of generation. It therefore belongs to some other class than that which is eternal and directly dependent upon the gods, and which goes about with them on the same ordered circuit. So then, the daemons also are impassible, and so are all those of the superior classes who follow along with them.

**11** So then, you ask, "Why is it that many theurgical procedures are directed towards them as if they were subject to passions?" Well, my reply to that is that the question is asked out of an inexperience of sacred mystagogy. Of the works of theurgy performed on any given occasion, some have a cause that is secret and superior to all rational explanation, others are like symbols consecrated from all eternity to the higher beings, others preserve some other image,<sup>68</sup> even as nature in its generative role imprints (upon things) visible shapes from invisible reason-principles; others yet are performed in honour of their subjects, or have as their aim some sort of assimilation or establishment of familiarity.<sup>69</sup> There are some, again, which provide something useful for us, or in some way or other purify and dissolve our human passions, or ward off some other of the dangers that menace us. One would not, however, for all that, agree that some part of our ritual is directed towards the gods or daemons, which are the subjects of our cult as subject to passions; for that essence which is in itself eternal and incorporeal cannot itself admit any alteration emanating from bodies.

<sup>68</sup> The distinction here made between *εἰκὼν* and *σύμβολον* may be mere literary variation, but it may reflect the distinction sometimes made in the Neoplatonic tradition between the two terms. Cf. Dillon (1975).

<sup>69</sup> Namely, with the divine. It is not clear what distinction is envisaged between *ἀφομολώσις* and *ὀλιγελώσις* in this context.

[38] | Οὐτε, εἰ ὅτι μάλιστα χρεῖαν εἶχε τοιαύτην, προσεδεήθη ἄν πο- 1  
 τε τῶν ἀνθρώπων εἰς τὴν τοιαύτην θρησκείαν, αὐτὴ ἅψ' ἑαυτῆς καὶ ἀπὸ  
 τῆς τοῦ κόσμου φύσεως καὶ τῆς ἐν τῇ γενέσει πάσης τελειότητος ἀπο-  
 πληρουμένη, καὶ εἰ οἷόν τε τοῦτο εἰπεῖν, πρὸ τοῦ δεῖσθαι προλαμβάνουσα  
 τὸ αὐταρκες διὰ τὴν ἀνενδεῆ τοῦ κόσμου ὀλότητα καὶ τὴν ἑαυτῆς οἰκείαν 5  
 ἀποπλήρωσιν, καὶ διότι μεστὰ πάντα τῶν οἰκείων ἀγαθῶν τὰ κρείττονα  
 γένη ὑπάρχει.

Κοινὰ μὲν οὖν ταῦθ' ἡμῖν ἔστω παραμύθια περὶ τῆς ἀχράντου θρη-  
 σκείας ὥς τὰ τ' ἄλλα οἰκείως συναρμοζομένης τοῖς κρείττοσιν ἡμῶν, καὶ  
 διότι καθαρὰ πρὸς καθαρὸν καὶ ἀπαθὲς πρὸς ἀπαθεῖς προσάγεται· τὰ 10  
 δ' ἐν τοῖς καθ' ἕκαστα ἐπιόντες τὴν μὲν τῶν φαλλῶν στάσιν τῆς γονίμου  
 δυνάμεως σύνθημά τι εἶναι φαμεν, καὶ ταύτην προκαλεῖσθαι νομίζομεν  
 [39] εἰς τὴν γενεσιουργίαν τοῦ κόσμου· διό|περ δὴ τὰ πολλὰ τῷ ἥρι καθιεροῦ- 1  
 ται, ὅτε δὴ καὶ ὁ πᾶς κόσμος δέχεται ἀπὸ τῶν θεῶν τῆς γενέσεως ὅλης  
 τὴν ἀπογέννησιν. Τὰς δ' αἰσχρορρημοσύνας τῆς περὶ τὴν ὕλην στερήσεως  
 τῶν καλῶν καὶ τῆς πρότερον ἀσχημοσύνης τῶν μελλόντων διακοσμεῖ-  
 σθαι ἡγοῦμαι τὸ ἐνδειγμα παραδέχεσθαι, ἅπερ ὄντα ἐνδεῆ τοῦ κοσμεῖσθαι 5  
 ἐφίεται τοσοῦτο μᾶλλον ὅσῳ πλέον καταγιγνώσκει τῆς περὶ ἑαυτὰ ἀπρε-  
 πείας. Πάλιν οὖν μεταδιώκει τὰ τῶν εἰδῶν καὶ καλῶν αἴτια, ἀπὸ τῆς τῶν  
 αἰσchrῶν ῥήσεως τὸ αἰσchrὸν καταμανθάνοντα· καὶ τὸ μὲν ἔργον τῶν αἰ-  
 schrῶν ἀποτρέπει, διὰ δὲ τῶν λόγων τὴν εἶδῃσιν αὐτοῦ ἐμφαίνει, καὶ πρὸς  
 τὸ ἐναντίον μεθίστησι τὴν ἔφεσιν. 10

Ἔχει δ' ἔτι ταῦτα καὶ ἄλλον λόγον τοιοῦτον. Αἱ δυνάμεις τῶν ἀν-  
 θρωπίνων παθημάτων τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν πάντῃ μὲν εἰργόμεναι καθίστανται  
 σφοδρότεραι· εἰς ἐνέργειαν δὲ βραχεῖς καὶ ἄχρι τοῦ συμμέτρου προαγόμε-  
 [40] ναι χαίρουσι | μετρίως καὶ ἀποπληροῦνται, καὶ ἐντεῦθεν ἀποκαθαιρόμεναι 1

[38].3 πάσης V: om. M || 5 ἀνενδεῆ cj. Z<sup>3</sup> i. m. et (ἀν i. m.) B<sup>4</sup>: ἐνδεῆ  
 VM | ἑαυτῆς cj. BQ: ἑαυτοῖς VM || 8 κοινὰ V: κοινὴ M | παραμύθια V:  
 παραμυθία M || 9 τὰ τ' ἄλλα V: om. M (lac. 5 ll.) || [39].10 μεθίστησι V:  
 καθίστησι M || 13 βραχεῖς] βραχεῖαν cj. Bernays (cf. 252, 13) || [40].1 καὶ  
 ἐντεῦθεν M: καὶ τὸ ἐντεῦθεν V

In any case, even if it were admitted that it had any such requirement, it would not have any need of human beings for such service as this, since of itself it derives fulfilment both from the nature of the cosmos and from the whole perfection of the realm of generation, and indeed, if one may so put it, even before having any need, it is assured of self-sufficiency by virtue of the non-deficient totality of the cosmos and its own proper fulfilment, and because all the superior classes of being are replete with their own proper goods.

Let this, then, be our general explanation of the unsullied mode of divine worship: it confers upon all other beings an intimate attachment to the classes superior to us, because in fact it brings the pure to the pure and the impassive to the impassive. Turning to your questions in more detail, however, we declare that "the erection of phallic images"<sup>70</sup> is a symbol of generative power, and we consider that this is directed towards the fecundating of the world; this is the reason, indeed, why most of these images are consecrated in the spring, since this is just when the whole world receives from the gods the power of generating all creation. And as for the "obscene utterances," my view is that they have the role of expressing the absence of beauty which is characteristic of matter and the previous ugliness of those things that are going to be brought to order, which, since they suffer from a lack of ordering, yearn for it in the same degree as they spurn the unseemliness that was previously their lot. So then, once again, one is prompted to seek after the causes of form and beauty when one learns the nature of obscenity from the utterance of obscenities; one rejects the practice of obscenities, while by means of uttering them one makes clear one's knowledge of them, and thus turns one's impulses in the opposite direction.

There is also another similar point to be made on this matter. The powers of the human passions that are within us, when they are repressed, become correspondingly stronger; but if one exercises them in brief bursts and within reasonable limits, they enjoy moderate relief and find satisfaction, and hence, being

<sup>70</sup> This being, plainly, one of the troublesome examples cited by Porphyry. Another one is cited just below.

πειθοῖ καὶ οὐ πρὸς βίαν ἀποπαύονται. Διὰ δὲ τοῦτο ἔν τε κωμῳδίᾳ καὶ τραγῳδίᾳ ἀλλότρια πάθη θεωροῦντες ἴσταμεν τὰ οἰκεῖα πάθη καὶ μετριώτερα ἀπεργαζόμεθα καὶ ἀποκαθαίρομεν· ἔν τε τοῖς ἱεροῖς θεάμασι τισι καὶ ἀκούσμασι τῶν αἰσχυρῶν ἀπολνόμεθα τῆς ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων ἀπ' αὐ- 5 τῶν συμπιπτούσης βλάβης.

Θεραπείας οὖν ἕνεκα τῆς ἐν ἡμῖν ψυχῆς καὶ μετριότητος τῶν διὰ τὴν γένεσιν προσφνομένων αὐτῇ κακῶν, λύσεώς τε ἀπὸ τῶν δεσμῶν καὶ ἀπαλλαγῆς χάριν τὰ τοιαῦτα προσάγεται. Καὶ διὰ τοῦτο εἰκότως αὐτὰ ἄκεα Ἡρόκλειτος προσεῖπεν, ὡς ἑξακούμενα τὰ δεινὰ καὶ τὰς ψυχὰς ἐξ- 10 ἀντεῖς ἀπεργαζόμενα τῶν ἐν τῇ γενέσει συμφορῶν.

**12** Ἄλλ' αἱ κλήσεις, φησὶν, ὡς πρὸς ἐμπαθεῖς τοὺς θεοὺς γίγνον-  
ται, ὥστε οὐχ οἱ δαίμονες μόνον εἰσὶν ἐμπαθεῖς, ἀλλὰ καὶ οἱ θεοί. Τὸ δὲ  
οὐχ οὕτως ἔχει καθάπερ ὑπείληφας. Αὐτοφανὴς γάρ τίς ἐστι καὶ αὐτοθε-  
λῆς ἢ διὰ τῶν κλήσεων ἔλλαμψις, πόρρω τε τοῦ καθέλκεσθαι ἀφέστηκε, 15  
[41] διὰ τῆς | θείας τε ἐνεργείας καὶ τελειότητος πρόεισιν εἰς τὸ ἐμφανές, καὶ 1  
τοσοῦτω προέχει τῆς ἐκουσίου κινήσεως ὅσον ἢ τὰ γαθοῦ θεία βούλησις  
τῆς προαιρετικῆς ὑπερέχει ζωῆς. Διὰ τῆς τοιαύτης οὖν βουλήσεως ἀφθό-  
νως οἱ θεοὶ τὸ φῶς ἐπιλάμπουσιν εὐμενεῖς ὄντες καὶ ἰλεῶ τοῖς θεουργοῖς,  
τάς τε ψυχὰς αὐτῶν εἰς ἑαυτοὺς ἀνακαλούμενοι καὶ τὴν ἔνωσιν αὐταῖς 5  
τὴν πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς χορηγοῦντες, ἐθίζοντές τε αὐτὰς καὶ ἔτι ἐν σώματι

[40].2 δὴ V: om. M || 7 ἕνεκα post οὖν M: post ψυχῆς V || 10  
ἑξακούμενα scripsi: ἑξακουόμενα VM ἑξακεσόμενα cj. Gale || 14-15 αὐτοθελῆς  
VM: αὐτοτελῆς cj. B

“purified,”<sup>71</sup> are laid to rest through persuasion, and not by violence. That is why, when we behold the passions of others both in comedy and in tragedy, we stabilise our own passions, and render them more moderate, and purify them; and similarly in the sacred rites, by viewing and listening to obscenities we are freed from the harm that would befall us if we practised them.

It is therefore for the tending of the soul within us, and for the moderation of the evils that attach themselves to it because of generation, and for the freeing and emancipation of it from its bonds<sup>72</sup> that such actions are performed. And that is why Heraclitus<sup>73</sup> was right to describe them as “remedies,” inasmuch as they cure the maladies that threaten us and render our souls resistant to the woes of generation.

**12** “But invocations,” the objection goes,<sup>74</sup> “are addressed to the gods as if they were subject to external influence,<sup>75</sup> so that it is not only daemons that are thus subject, but also the gods.” In fact, however, your assumption is not correct. For the illumination that comes about as a result of invocations is self-revelatory and self-willed, and is far removed from being drawn down by force, but rather proceeds to manifestation by reason of its own divine energy and perfection, and is as far superior to (human) voluntary motion as the divine will of the Good is to the life of ordinary deliberation and choice.<sup>76</sup> It is by virtue of such will, then, that the gods in their benevolence and graciousness unstintingly shed their light upon theurgists, summoning up their souls to themselves and orchestrating their union with them, accustoming them, even while still in the body, to detach themselves from

<sup>71</sup> A clear reference to the Aristotelian theory of catharsis, as set out in *Poetics* 6. For discussion see Clarke (2001, 78).

<sup>72</sup> An allusion, presumably, to the freeing of the prisoner in the Cave, in *Republic* 7.515c (λύσεώς τε ἀπὸ τῶν δεσμῶν embodies a verbal reminiscence).

<sup>73</sup> Frg. 68 D–K. One may reasonably doubt whether Heraclitus meant what “Abamon” wants him to mean.

<sup>74</sup> This seems a reasonable rendering of the third person φησίν, which is otherwise a little odd, since “Abamon” addresses Porphyry directly most of the time.

<sup>75</sup> This seems to be the sense of ἐμπαθεῖς here.

<sup>76</sup> This distinction seems to owe something to Plotinus’s discussion of the nature of divine freedom in *Enn.* 6.8. The correct rendering of προαιρετικῆς ζωῆς is not an easy matter; it means a life subject to rational choices between alternatives, such as the gods do not have to make.

οὐσας ἀφίστασθαι τῶν σωμάτων, ἐπὶ δὲ τὴν αἰδίον καὶ νοητὴν αὐτῶν ἀρχὴν περιάγεσθαι.

Δῆλον δὲ καὶ ἀπ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἔργων ὃ νυνὶ φαμεν εἶναι τῆς ψυχῆς σωτήριον· ἐν γὰρ τῷ θεωρεῖν τὰ μακάρια θεάματα ἢ ψυχὴ ἄλλην ζωὴν 10 ἀλλάττεται καὶ ἑτέραν ἐνέργειαν ἐνεργεῖ καὶ οὐδ' ἀνθρωπος εἶναι ἡγεῖται τότε, ὁρθῶς ἡγουμένη· πολλάκις δὲ καὶ τὴν ἑαυτῆς ἀφεῖσα ζωὴν τὴν μακαριωτάτην τῶν θεῶν ἐνέργειαν ἀντηλλάξατο. Εἰ δὲ καθάρσιν παθῶν καὶ ἀπαλλαγὴν γενέσεως ἐνωσὴν τε πρὸς τὴν θεῖαν ἀρχὴν ἢ διὰ τῶν κλήσεων [42] ἀνοδος παρ|έχει τοῖς ἱερεῦσι, τί δήποτε πάθῃ τις αὐτῇ προσάπτει; οὐ 1 γὰρ τοὺς ἀπαθεῖς καὶ καθαροὺς εἰς τὸ παθητὸν καὶ ἀκάθαρτον ἢ τοιαύτη κατασπᾶ, τοῦναντίον δὲ τοὺς ἐμπαθεῖς γενομένους ἡμᾶς διὰ τὴν γένεσιν καθαρὸς καὶ ἀτρέπτους ἀπεργάζεται.

Ἄλλ' οὐδ' αἱ προσκλήσεις διὰ πάθους συνάπτουσι τοῖς θεοῖς τοὺς 5 ἱερέας· διὰ δὲ τῆς θείας φιλίας τῆς συνεχούσης τὰ πάντα κοινωνίαν παρέχουσι τῆς ἀδιαλύτου συμπλοκῆς· οὐχ ὥς τοῦνομα, ὥς γε οὕτω δόξαι, αὐτόθεν ἐμφαίνει, τὸν νοῦν τῶν θεῶν προσκλίνουσαι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, ἀλλὰ κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ ἀληθές ὥς βούλεται ἀναδιδάσκειν, τὴν γνώμην τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπιτηδεῖαν ἀπεργαζόμεναι πρὸς τὸ μετέχειν τῶν θεῶν, καὶ ἀνάγουσαι 10 αὐτὴν πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς καὶ διὰ πειθοῦς ἐμμελοῦς συναρμόζουσαι. Ὅθεν δὴ καὶ ὀνόματα θεῶν ἱεροπρεπεῖ καὶ τᾶλλα θεῖα συνθήματα ἀναγωγὰ ὄντα πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς συνάπτειν αὐτὰς δύναται.

[43] | **13** Καὶ δὴ καὶ αἱ τῆς μήνιδος ἐξιλάσεις ἔσσονται σαφεῖς, ἐὰν 1 τὴν μῆνιν τῶν θεῶν καταμάθωμεν. Αὕτη τοίνυν οὐχ, ὥς δοκεῖ τισι, παλαιά τις ἐστὶ καὶ ἔμμονος ὀργή, ἀλλὰ τῆς ἀγαθοεργοῦ κηδεμονίας παρὰ θεῶν ἀποστροφή, ἣν αὐτοὶ ἑαυτοὺς ἀποστρέψαντες, ὥσπερ ἐν μεσημβρίᾳ

[41].12 δὲ M: om. V || [42].5 προσκλήσεις ] προσκλίσεις cj. Gale || 13 αὐτὰς ] an αὐτὴν? || [43].3 ἀγαθοεργοῦ VM: ἀγαθοεργου fec. V<sup>2</sup> | παρὰ cj. i. m. V<sup>2</sup>Z<sup>4</sup>: περὶ VM τῶν cj. Nock || 4 ἦν ] ἥς cj. Sicherl

their bodies, and to turn themselves towards their eternal and intelligible first principle.

It is plain, indeed, from the rites themselves, that what we are speaking of just now is a method of salvation for the soul; for in the contemplation of the “blessed visions”<sup>77</sup> the soul exchanges one life for another and exerts a different activity, and considers itself then to be no longer human—and quite rightly so: for often, having abandoned its own life, it has gained in exchange the most blessed activity of the gods. If, then, it is purification from passions and freedom from the toils of generation and unification with the divine first principle that the ascent through invocations procures for the priests, how on earth can one attach the notion of passions to this process? For it is not the case that such activity draws down the passionless and pure into proneness to passion and impurity; on the contrary, it renders us, who have come to be subject to passions by reason of birth, pure and immutable.

But not even in the case of the invocations is it through the experiencing of passion that they link the priests to the gods; it is rather in virtue of the divine love which holds together all things that they provide a union of indissoluble involvement—not, as the name seems immediately to imply, inclining the mind of the gods to humans, but rather, as the truth of things itself desires to teach us, disposing the human mind to participation in the gods, leading it up to the gods and bringing it into accord with them through harmonious persuasion. And it is for this reason, indeed, that the sacred names of the gods and the other types of divine symbol that have the capacity of raising us up to the gods are enabled to link us to them.

**13** Again, the question of the “propitiations of (divine) wrath” will become clear, if we take the trouble to comprehend the true nature of the “wrath” of the gods. This is not, as is believed in some quarters, any sort of ancient and abiding anger,<sup>78</sup> but a consequence of the rejection of the beneficent solicitude of the gods, which involves our turning ourselves away from them,

<sup>77</sup> This seems to embody a reference to the *μακαρίαι θεαί* of Plato, *Phaedr.* 247a4.

<sup>78</sup> As Des Places suggests ad loc., this looks like a reference to Plato, *Phaedr.* 244d, where there is talk of “diseases and very great troubles” being visited upon certain families by reason of ancient blood-guilt. This sounds, therefore, like a glancing criticism of Plato.



φωτὸς κατακαλυψάμενοι, σκότος ἑαυτοῖς ἐπηγάγομεν καὶ ἀπεστερήσαμεν 5  
 ἑαυτοὺς τῆς τῶν θεῶν ἀγαθῆς δόσεως. Δύνатаι οὖν ἡ ἐξίλασις ἡμᾶς ἐπι-  
 στρέφει πρὸς τὴν κρείττονα μετουσίαν, καὶ τὴν ἀνεσταλμένην ἀφ' ἡμῶν  
 θεῖαν κηδεμονίαν εἰς κοινωνίαν προαγαγεῖν, καὶ συνδῆσαι συμμέτρως τὰ  
 μετεχόμενά τε καὶ μεταλαμβάνοντα πρὸς ἄλληλα. Τοσοῦτον οὖν ἀφέστηκε 10  
 τοῦ διὰ πάθους ἐπιτελεῖν τὸ ἑαυτῆς ἔργον ὥστε καὶ ἡμᾶς ἀφίστησι τῆς  
 ἐμπαθοῦς καὶ ταραχώδους ἀπὸ τῶν θεῶν ἀποστροφῆς.

Αἱ δ' ἐκθύσεις ὃ τι πάρεστι κακὸν ἐν τοῖς περὶ γῆν τόποις ἰατρεύου-  
 σι καὶ παρασκευάζουσιν ὥστε μηδεμίαν τροπὴν ἢ πάθος τι περὶ ἡμᾶς  
 γενέσθαι. Εἴτε οὖν διὰ θεῶν εἴτε διὰ δαιμόνων ἡ τοιαύτη γίγνοιτο, βοη-  
 [44] θοὺς | ἐπικαλεῖται καὶ ἀλεξικάκους καὶ σωτῆρας τούτους, καὶ δι' αὐτῶν 1  
 ἀποδιοπομπεῖται πᾶσαν ἐπιούσαν ἀπὸ τῶν παθημάτων βλάβην. Οἱ δὲ τὰς  
 πληγὰς ἀποτρέποντες τὰς γενεσιουργοὺς καὶ φυσικὰς οὐκ ἔστιν ὅπως ποτὲ  
 διὰ παθῶν αὐτὰς ἀπείργουσιν. Εἴ τε νενόμικέ τις τὴν ἀπόληψιν τῆς προσ-  
 τασίας ἐπεισάγειν τινὰ αὐτόματον βλάβην, ἢ διὰ τῆς ἐκθύσεως περὶ τῶν 5  
 κρειπτόνων, εἰς κηδεμονίαν ἀνακαλουμένην πάλιν αὐτῶν τὴν εὐμένειαν καὶ  
 ἀποτρέπουσα τὴν στέρξιν, παντελῶς ἂν εἴη καθαρά καὶ ἄτρεπτος.

14 Ἔτι τοίνυν αἱ λεγόμεναι θεῶν ἀνάγκαι τὸ ὅλον τοῦτο θεῶν  
 εἰσιν ἀνάγκαι καὶ ὥς ἐπὶ θεῶν γίγνονται. Οὐκ ἄρα ὥς ἔξωθεν οὐδ' ὥς  
 κατὰ βίαν, ἀλλ' ὥς τὰγαθὸν ὠφελεῖ ἐξ ἀνάγκης, οὕτως ἔχουσι τὸ πάντη 10  
 οὕτως καὶ μηδαμῶς ἄλλως διακεῖσθαι. Βουλήσει ἄρα ἀγαθοειδεῖ συγκέ-  
 [45] κραται αὕτη καὶ ἔρωτός ἐστι φίλη ἡ τοιαύτη ἀνάγκη, τάξει τε | οἰκεία 1  
 θεῶν ἔχει τὸ ταῦτόν καὶ ἄτρεπτον, καὶ ὅτι κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ ὡσαύτως  
 ἐνὶ ὄρω συνέχεται, καὶ ἐμμένει τούτῳ καὶ οὐδέποτε ἐξίσταται. Διὰ πάν-  
 τα δὲ οὖν ταῦτα τὸ ἐναντίον συμβαίνει οὐδ' οὐ συνελογίσω· ἀκήλητον καὶ  
 ἀπαθὲς καὶ ἀβίαστον συμβαίνει εἶναι τὸ θεῖον, εἴπερ ὄντως ἀληθεῖς εἰσιν 5

[43].5 κατακαλυψάμενοι M: καταλυψάμενοι V || 8 προαγαγεῖν VM:  
 προσαγαγεῖν cj. Gale || 14 γίγνοιτο VM: γένοιτο cj. B || [44].1 ἐπικαλεῖται  
 VM: ἐπικαλεῖ τε cj. B || 4 ἀπείργουσιν V: ἀπείργειν M | ἀπόληψιν ] ἀπό-  
 λειψιν cj. Gale || 5 αὐτόματον V: ἀσώματον M || 9 εἰσιν M: ἴδιαι i. m.  
 V<sup>2</sup> εἰδὶ V || 10 βίαν i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: μίαν VM | τὸ VM: τὸ τῷ (τῷ i. m. V<sup>2</sup> ||  
 12 αὕτη ] an αὐτή? || [45].2 τὸ ταῦτόν M et (τ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: τοσαυτόν V || 5-6  
 ἀληθεῖς εἰσιν αἱ τοιαίδε ] an ἀληθῶς εἰσιν τοιαίδε αἱ?

just as though in the middle of the day we were to hide ourselves from the light, and so bring darkness upon ourselves and deprive ourselves of the excellent gift of the gods. "Propitiation," then, has the capacity to turn us towards participation in the higher realm, and to bring us into communion with the divine care which had been denied us, and to bind together harmoniously with one another, participants and participated. So far, then, is it from accomplishing its work through the medium of passion, that it actually relieves us of the passion and turbulence that accompanies our turning away from the gods.

As for the "expiatory rites," their purpose is to heal the evil present in the terrestrial realm, and to ensure that no deviation or passion manifests itself in us. Whether such a result comes about by means of gods or daemons, the purpose of the rites is to invoke these as helpers and protectors and saviours, and through them to conjure away all harm emanating from influences from the sense-world.<sup>79</sup> There is no way, after all, that those who turn aside the assaults of the world of nature and generation can achieve this through the employment of passions. And if anyone thinks that the cutting off of protective care automatically brings with it some harm, then the persuasion which expiatory rites exercise upon the higher classes of being, recalling them once again to care and goodwill towards us, and averting the deprivation of this, would be entirely pure and immutable.

**14** Furthermore, the so-called "necessities of the gods" are just that: necessities of the gods, and come about in accordance with the nature of the gods.<sup>80</sup> It is not, then, as from an outside source or by force, but as their good would have it of necessity, that they are always so disposed, and never inclined otherwise. Such a necessity as this, then, is mingled with a benign will and is a friend of love, and by virtue of an order proper to gods possesses identity and unchangeability, and because it is, according to the same terms and conditions, held within a single limit, it remains within it and does not step outside of it. So, for all these reasons, there results the contrary of your conclusions; the consequence is that the divine is exempt from external bewitchment or affection

<sup>79</sup> This seems a more satisfactory rendering than "passions."

<sup>80</sup> The meaning of *θεῶν ἀνάγκαι* here is "necessities put upon the gods" by spells and suchlike. "Abamon" deliberately gives the phrase another meaning, that of "necessities emanating from the gods," in what follows.

αἱ τοιαῖδε ἐν τῇ θεουργίᾳ δυνάμεις, οἷας ἡμεῖς ἀπεδείξαμεν.

**15** Μετὰ δὲ ταύτην ἐπ' ἄλλην μεταβαίνειν ἀντιδιαίρεσιν θεῶν  
 πρὸς δαίμονας· λέγεις γὰρ θεοὺς εἶναι νόας καθαρούς, ὥς ἐν ὑποθέσει  
 προτείνων τὴν δόξαν ἣ ὥς τιςιν ἀρέσκουσιν αὐτὴν ἀφηγούμενος, νοῦ δὲ  
 μετόχους ψυχικοὺς ὄντας τοὺς δαίμονας ἀπολογιζόμενος. Ὅτι μὲν οὖν φι- 10  
 λοσόφων τοῖς πολλοῖς ταῦτα δοκεῖ, οὐδ' ἐμὲ λέληθε· πρὸς δὲ σὲ οὐκ οἶμαι  
 δεῖν ἀποκρύπτεσθαι τὸ φαινόμενον ἀληθές. Ὑποσυγκέχνηται γὰρ πάντα τὰ  
 τοιαῦτα δοξάσματα, ἀπὸ μὲν τῶν δαιμόνων ἐπὶ τὰς ψυχὰς ἀποφερόμενα  
 [46] (νοῦ | γὰρ μέτοχοί εἰσιν αὗται) ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν θεῶν ἐπὶ τὸν κατ' ἐνέργειαν 1  
 αἴνλον νοῦν ἀποπίπτοντα, οὗ δὴ παντελῶς οἱ θεοὶ προέχουσιν. Τί οὖν δεῖ  
 ταῦτα ἰδιώματα ἀπονέμειν, ἅπερ οὐδ' ὅλως ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς οἰκεῖα· τὸ μὲν  
 δὴ τῆς διαιρέσεως (πάρεργον γὰρ ἐστὶν ἄλλως) μέχρι τοσοῦτον μνήμης  
 ἀξιούσθω· ἃ δὲ καὶ πρὸς ταύτην ἀπορεῖς, ἐπέπερ ἄπτεται τῆς ἱερατικῆς 5  
 θεραπειάς, λόγου τυγχανέτω τοῦ προσήκοντος.

Ἔτι γὰρ μᾶλλον ἀκλίτους καὶ ἀμιγεῖς αἰσθητοῖς εἰπὼν εἶναι τοὺς  
 καθαρὸς νόας ἀπορεῖς, εἰ δεῖ πρὸς αὐτοὺς εὐχεσθαι. Ἐγὼ δ' οὐδ' ἄλ-  
 λους τιςὶν ἡγοῦμαι δεῖν εὐχεσθαι. Τὸ γὰρ θεῖον ἐν ἡμῖν καὶ νοερὸν καὶ ἐν,  
 ἣ εἰ νοητὸν αὐτὸ καλεῖν ἐθέλοις, ἐγείρεται τότε ἐναργῶς ἐν ταῖς εὐχαῖς, 10

[45].10 ψυχικοὺς M: ψυχικὰς V || [46].3 ταῦτα VM: ταῦτα τὰ cj.  
 Velsenius | ἐστὶν V: εἰσὶν M || 4 ἄλλως M: ἄγγεως V || 9 νοερὸν cj.  
 Gale: νοητὸν VM

or constraint, if in truth the powers inherent in theurgy are real, and such as we have demonstrated them to be.

15 Following upon this, you pass to another feature differentiating gods and daemons; for you say that "gods are pure intellects," advancing this opinion as an agreed principle, or presenting it as the view of certain people, whereas you reckon daemons, as being ensouled, to be merely "participant in intellect." Now I am quite well aware that the majority of philosophers hold this view, but I do not think that I should conceal from you what I believe to be the truth. In fact, all opinions of this sort are subject to a certain degree of confusion, since they involve a transfer of characteristics from daemons to souls (for these latter are participant in intellect), and from gods in turn to the immaterial Intellect in act,<sup>81</sup> to which the gods are absolutely superior. Why, then, should one attribute these things to them as properties, when they are not proper to them at all? So let this mention suffice as regards the point of differentiation (more would be superfluous, since it is irrelevant to the main question); however, the difficulties which you raise concerning it, since they have some bearing on hieratic cult, should be given due consideration.

So then, after declaring that pure intellects are "unbending and not mingled with the sensible realm," you raise the question as to whether it is proper to pray to them. For my part, I would hold the view that it is not proper to pray to any others. For that element in us which is divine and intellectual and one—or, if you so wish to term it, intelligible<sup>82</sup>—is aroused, then,

<sup>81</sup> That is to say, from νοῦς at the highest level of the hypostasis of Intellect (= Being), which is what gods are, down to Νοῦς proper, the third and lowest moment of the hypostasis, which is "in act" what the gods are "in potency" or "covertly." These gods may be identified with what Iamblichus elsewhere calls "the monads of the forms" (cf. *Comm. Phileb.* frg. 4). Since the highest element in any given hypostasis is theoretically identical with the lowest element of the one above it, these entities may also be regarded as henads, the lowest element in the realm of the One, as they were later for Syrianus and the Athenian School.

<sup>82</sup> The terms "intellectual" and "intelligible" actually pertain to different levels of being in Iamblichus's metaphysics, and the highest element in us would be intelligible (and indeed unitary), rather than intellectual, but "Abamon" seems here to be relatively unconcerned with the distinction. For the distinction between the noetic, noeric, and even noetic-noeric realms, however, see Dillon (1973, 417–19) and *Comm. Tim.* frg. 34 Dillon with comments ad loc.

ἐγειρόμενον δὲ ἐφίεται τοῦ ὁμοίου διαφερόντως καὶ συνάπτεται πρὸς αὐ-  
 τοτελειότητα. Εἰ δέ σοι ἄπιστον εἶναι καταφαίνεται, πῶς φωνῆς ἀκούει  
 τὸ ἀσώματον καὶ ὡς αἰσθήσεως προσδεήσεται καὶ δὴ ὧτων τὰ λεγόμε-  
 [47] να ὕφ' ἡμῶν ἐν ταῖς εὐχαῖς, ἐκὼν ἐπιλανθάνῃ τῆς τῶν πρώτων | αἰτίων 1  
 περιουσίας ἔν τε τῷ εἰδέναι καὶ τῷ περιέχειν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς τὰ ὕφ' ἑαυτῶν  
 πάντα· ἐν ἐνὶ γὰρ δήπου συνείληφεν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ὁμοῦ τὰ ὅλα· οὔτε δὴ οὖν  
 διὰ δυνάμεων οὔτε δι' ὀργάνων εἰσδέχονται εἰς ἑαυτοὺς οἱ θεοὶ τὰς εὐ-  
 χάς, ἐν ἑαυτοῖς δὲ περιέχουσι τῶν ἀγαθῶν τὰς ἐνεργείας τῶν λόγων, καὶ 5  
 μάλιστα ἐκείνων οἵτινες διὰ τῆς ἱερᾶς ἀγιστείας ἐνιδρυμένοι τοῖς θεοῖς  
 καὶ συνηνωμένοι τυγχάνουσιν· ἀτεχνῶς γὰρ τηνικαῦτα αὐτὸ τὸ θεῖον πρὸς  
 ἑαυτὸ σύνεστι, καὶ οὐδ' ὥς ἕτερον πρὸς ἕτερον κοινωνεῖ τῶν ἐν ταῖς εὐχαῖς  
 νοήσεων.

Ἄλλ' αἱ λιτανεῖαι, ὡς φῆς, ἀλλότριά εἰσι προσφέρεσθαι πρὸς τὴν 10  
 τοῦ νοῦ καθαρότητα. Οὐδαμῶς· δι' αὐτὸ γὰρ τοιοῦτο, διότι τῇ δυνάμει  
 καὶ καθαρότητι καὶ τοῖς πᾶσι τῶν θεῶν ἀπολειπόμεθα, ἐγκαιριότατόν ἐστι  
 πάντων ἱκετεῦν αὐτοὺς εἰς ὑπερβολήν. Ἡ μὲν γὰρ συναίσθησις τῆς περὶ  
 ἑαυτοὺς οὐδενείας, εἴ τις ἡμᾶς παραβάλλον τοῖς θεοῖς κρίνοι, ποιεῖ τρέπε-

[46].13 δὴ scripsi: δι' codd.; secl. (vel δύο cj.) Sodano || 14 εὐχαῖς  
 VM: προσευχαῖς cj. Parthey || [47].11 post καθαρότητα spatium 6 ll. in V,  
 3 in M; post οὐδαμῶς, 4 ll. in V, 3 in M (quibus tantum indicari dialogum vult  
 Bidez, *Mélanges Desrousseaux*, p. 15, n. 2)

clearly in prayer, and when aroused, strives primarily towards what is like to itself, and joins itself to essential perfection.<sup>83</sup> And if it seems to you incredible that the incorporeal should hear a voice,<sup>84</sup> and that what we utter in prayer should have need of a further sense-organ, and specifically of ears, you are deliberately forgetting the facility of the primary causes for knowing and comprehending within themselves all that is inferior to them; for they embrace in unity within themselves all beings together.<sup>85</sup> So then, it is neither through faculties nor through organs that the gods receive into themselves our prayers, but rather they embrace within themselves the realisations of the words of good men, and in particular of those which,<sup>86</sup> by virtue of the sacred liturgy, are established within the gods and united to them; for in that case the divine is literally united with itself, and it is not in the way of one person addressing another that it participates in the thought expressed by the prayers.

“But prayers of petition,”<sup>87</sup> you say, “are not suitable for presentation to the purity of the Intellect.” Not so: for by reason of this very circumstance, i.e. that we are inferior to the gods in power and in purity and all other respects, it is eminently suitable that we entreat them to the greatest degree possible. The consciousness of our own nothingness, if one judges it in comparison with the gods, makes us naturally turn to supplications; and by the

<sup>83</sup> Or, “the archetype of perfection.” The term αὐτοτελειότης is found only here.

<sup>84</sup> As Des Places points out ad loc., this echoes Plotinus’s criticism of the Gnostics in *Enn.* 2.9.14, where he asks them sarcastically if they imagine that the incorporeal is affected by sounds (lines 8–9). Plotinus is referring to the Gnostic practice, which they shared with the magical tradition, of binding the gods or daemons with magical names and utterances. This is what “Abamon” is here rejecting, in the name of the higher theurgy.

<sup>85</sup> A reference to the ὁμοῦ πάντα of Anaxagoras, a favourite epithet of the intelligible realm since Plotinus.

<sup>86</sup> We take this to refer to the λόγοι rather than to those who utter them. These would presumably include the various kinds of *voces magicae* recognised in theurgic ritual. This is in accord with the view that Iamblichus expresses elsewhere that theurgic formulae have a special power deriving from the fact that they are in some way divine language, immediately comprehensible to gods, though not to us. It is therefore as if the divine in us is communicating directly with the divine in the universe. For Iamblichus’s doctrine of prayer, see below IV.3; V.26; for discussion see Dillon (1973, 407–11).

<sup>87</sup> This is the specific meaning of λιτανεῖαι.

σθαι πρὸς τὰς λιτὰς αὐτοφνῶς· ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς ἱκετείας κατὰ βραχὺ πρὸς τὸ 15  
 [48] ἱκε|τενόμενον ἀναγόμεθα, καὶ τὴν πρὸς αὐτὸ ὁμοιότητα ἀπὸ τοῦ συνεχῶς 1  
 αὐτῷ προσομιλεῖν κτόμεθα, τελειότητά τε θείαν ἡρέμα προσλαμβάνομεν  
 ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀτελοῦς.

Εἰ δέ τις ἐννοήσῃ καὶ τὰς ἱερατικὰς ἱκετείας ὥς ἀπ' αὐτῶν τῶν  
 θεῶν ἀνθρώποις κατεπέμφθησαν, καὶ ὅτι τῶν θεῶν αὐτῶν εἰσι συνθήμα- 5  
 τα καὶ μόνοις τοῖς θεοῖς ὑπάρχουσι γινώριμοι, τρόπον τέ τινα καὶ αὗται  
 τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχουσι δύναμιν τοῖς θεοῖς, πῶς ἂν ἔτι αἰσθητὴν τὴν τοιαύτην  
 ἀλλ' οὐ θείαν καὶ νοερὰν ὑπολάβοι δικαίως εἶναι ἱκετείαν; ἢ τί ἂν εἰκό-  
 τως πάθος εἰς αὐτὴν παρεμπίπτοι, εἰς ἣν οὐδ' ἀνθρώπινον ἥθος σπουδαῖον  
 δύναται ῥαδίως ἀποκαθαίρεσθαι; 10

Ἀλλὰ τὰ προσαγόμενα, φησὶν, ὥς πρὸς αἰσθητικούς καὶ ψυχικούς  
 προσάγεται. Εἰ γε σωματικαῖς δυνάμεσι καὶ συνθέτοις μόναίς συμπεπλή-  
 ρωτο ἢ ὥσπερ εἰς ὑπηρεσίαν ὀργάνων ψιλὴν ὑποκειμέναις· ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ  
 ἄσωμάτων εἰδῶν μετέχουσι τὰ προσαγόμενα καὶ λόγων τινῶν καὶ μέτρων  
 [49] ἀπλουστέρων, κατ' αὐτὸ τοῦτο μόνον τῶν προσαγομένων | θεωρεῖται ἢ οἰ- 1  
 κειότης, καὶ εἴ τις ἐγγύθεν ἢ πόρρωθεν συγγένεια ἢ ὁμοιότης πάρεστιν,  
 ἐξαρκεῖ καὶ αὕτη πρὸς ἣν νυνὶ λέγομεν συναφήν· οὐδὲ γάρ ἐστὶ τι τῶν  
 κατὰ βραχὺ προσωκειωμένων τοῖς θεοῖς, ᾧ μὴ πάρεσιν εὐθὺς οἱ θεοὶ  
 καὶ συνάπτονται. Οὐκ ἄρα ὥς πρὸς αἰσθητικούς ἢ ψυχικούς, κατ' αὐτὰ 5  
 δὲ τὰ θεῖα εἶδη καὶ πρὸς αὐτοὺς τοὺς θεοὺς γίγνεται αὐτῶν ἢ κατὰ τὸ  
 δυνατὸν ἐπιπλοκή. Ὡστε καὶ περὶ ταύτης τῆς διαιρέσεως ἀποχρώντως  
 ἀντειρήκαμεν.

16 Ἐχεται δὲ ταύτης ἐν τοῖς σοῖς γραμμασιν ἡ σώματι καὶ ἄσω-  
 ματία θεοὺς δαιμόνων χωρίζουσα, μακρῶ δὴ τινι κοινοτέρα οὕσα τῆς 10

[48].11 φησὶν VM: φῆς cj. Gale || 12-13 συμπεπλήρωτο M: συνεπλή-  
 ρωτο V || 14 τὰ προσαγόμενα M: om. V || [49].6 εἶδη (ei ex η et εἶδη i.  
 m.) V<sup>2</sup>: ᾗδη VM

practice of supplication we are raised gradually to the level of the object of our supplication, and we gain likeness to it by virtue of our constant consorting with it, and, starting from our own imperfection, we gradually take on the perfection of the divine.

And if one were to consider also how the hieratic prayer-formulae have been sent down to mortals by the gods themselves, and that they are the symbols of the gods themselves, and not known to anyone but them, and that in a way they possess the same power as the gods themselves, how could one any longer justly believe that such supplication is derived from the sense-world, and is not divine and intellectual? Or how could any element of passion be reasonably insinuated into this activity, seeing that not even a virtuous human character can easily be brought to the requisite level of purity?<sup>88</sup>

“But the offerings made,” so the argument says, “are presented as if to beings possessed of sense-perception and souls.” Yes, if they were made up only of corporeal and composite powers, or such as were calculated, as it were, merely to appeal to (sense)-organs; but since the offerings partake also of incorporeal forms and of reason-principles of a certain sort and measurements of simple nature, from this very circumstance alone one may see the suitability of the offerings. And indeed, if any degree of kinship and likeness, whether near or remote, is present, this is sufficient for the contact of which are now speaking. For nothing enters, even to a minimal extent, into likeness with the gods, to which the gods are not straightway present and united. It is not, then, as with beings which are possessed of sense-perception and souls, but in accordance with the divine forms themselves and with the gods themselves, that the contact (resulting from these offerings), so far as possible,<sup>89</sup> comes about. That, then, will suffice as a reply to this distinction you make.

**16** Following on from this distinction, there comes, in your treatise, a section distinguishing gods and daemons in respect of corporeality and incorporeality, a distinction much more

<sup>88</sup> That is to say—and it is a point often reiterated by “Abamon” (see e.g. II.11.96–97)—not even the most accomplished sage, so long as he maintains a purely intellectual approach (as does Porphyry, and as did Plotinus), can attain to the highest levels of theurgic union.

<sup>89</sup> An employment of the Platonist formulation κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν from *Theaet.* 176b1–2.



πρότερον, καὶ τοσοῦτον ἀπέχονσα τοῦ τὰ ἰδιώματα αὐτῶν τῆς οὐσίας φρά-  
ζειν ὥστε μὴδ' εἰκάσαι εἶναι περὶ αὐτῶν μηδὲ τῶν συμβεβηκότων αὐτοῖς  
ὅτιοῦν· οὐδὲ γὰρ αὐτὸ τοῦτο, εἰ ζῶά ἐστιν ἢ μὴ ζῶα καὶ πότερον ἐστέ-  
ρηται ζωῆς ἢ οὐδ' ὅλως αὐτῆς δεῖται, δυνατὸν ἀπὸ τούτων κατανοῆσαι.

[50] Ἔτι τοίνυν οὐδὲ πῶς λέγεται ταῦτα | τὰ ὀνόματα, εἴτε κοινῶς εἴτε κατὰ 1  
πλειόνων διαφερόντων, ῥάδιον συμβαλεῖν· εἰ μὲν κοινῶς, ἄτοπον εἰ ὑπὸ  
ταῦτο γένος ἐστὶ τὸ ἀσώματον, γραμμὴ τε καὶ χρόνος καὶ θεός, δαίμο-  
νές τε καὶ πῦρ καὶ ὕδωρ· εἰ δὲ κατὰ πλειόνων, τί μᾶλλον θεοὺς ἢ σημεία  
δηλοῖς, ὅταν ἀσώματον εἴπῃς; ἢ ὅταν σῶμα, τίς οὐκ ἂν ὑπολάβοι γῆν 5  
μᾶλλον εἰρησθαι ἢ δαίμονας; οὐδὲ γὰρ αὐτὸ τοῦτο διώριστα, εἰ ἔχουσι  
σώματα ἢ ἐποχοῦνται σώμασιν ἢ χρῶνται αὐτοῖς ἢ περιέχουσιν αὐτὰ ἢ  
μόνον ταῦτό ἐστι σῶματι. Ἄλλ' ἴσως οὐ δεῖ πάντι βασανίζειν τὴν ἀν-  
τιδιαστολὴν ταύτην· οὐδὲ γὰρ ὡς σαντοῦ γνώμην ταύτην προτείνεις, ἀλλ'  
ὡς ἐτέρων αὐτὴν δόξαν ἀποφαίνῃ. 10

17 Μεταλάβωμεν οὖν ἀντὶ ταύτης ἅπερ ἠπόρησας πρὸς τὴν παρ-  
οῦσαν δόξαν. Πῶς γὰρ δὴ ἡλιός τε καὶ σελήνη κατὰ τὸν σὸν λόγον καὶ οἱ  
ἐν οὐρανῷ ἐμφανεῖς ἔσονται θεοί, εἰ ἀσώματοί εἰσι μόνως οἱ θεοί; ὅτι δὴ  
[51] οὐ περιέχονται ὑπὸ τῶν σωμάτων, φαμέν ἡμεῖς, ἀλλὰ ταῖς θείαις | ζωαῖς 1

[49].11 τοῦ τὰ M: ταῦτα V || 12 εἶναι] an ἀφείναι? || [50].1 κατὰ  
VM: καὶ κατὰ (καὶ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 5 εἴπῃς V: εἴποισ M | ὅταν<sup>2</sup> V: om. M ||  
8 ταῦτό cj. Velsenius: τοῦτο VM | σῶματι M: σώματα V

general than the preceding one, and so far removed from indicating the proper features of their essences that one is unable even to conjecture anything about them or about any of their accidents. One cannot even discern, on the basis of this, whether they are living beings or not, and if the latter, whether they are deprived of life or, conversely, have no need of it at all. And further, it is not easy to work out how these words are to be understood, whether as having their common meaning or a number of differentiated ones. If they have their common meaning, it is very odd if under the same genus "incorporeal" there should be grouped "line" and "time" and "god,"<sup>90</sup> <while under that of "body"><sup>91</sup> are grouped "daemons" and "fire" and "water." But if they have a variety of meanings, why would you be referring to gods rather than points, when you talk of the incorporeal? Or when you talk of body, who would not take it that earth is being spoken of rather than daemons? For neither is this point clearly defined, whether they<sup>92</sup> are to be regarded as possessing bodies, or being mounted upon them, or enveloping them, or making use of them,<sup>93</sup> or just as being the same as body. But perhaps one should not examine this distinction too closely; for you are not proposing it as your own view, but are stating it as the opinion of others.

**17** Let us turn, instead of this, to the difficulty you raise against the following doctrine. "How is it," you say, "that according to your theory both sun and moon and the other visible beings in the heavens are gods, if the gods are exclusively incorporeal?" Well now, what we assert is that they are not enveloped by bodies, but rather that by virtue of divine modes of life and activity it

<sup>90</sup> Lines and other geometrical entities were regarded as incorporeal by Platonists, and Time by both Platonists and Stoics. "Abamon" is making shrewd use of Hellenic logic here.

<sup>91</sup> It seems necessary for the sense to supply something such as ὑπὸ δὲ τὸ σῶμα after θεός.

<sup>92</sup> Namely, the daemons.

<sup>93</sup> The point of differentiation here is the degree of contact involved. Similarly in the case of the heavenly bodies, it remained a point of controversy in Platonism whether they were souls inhabiting fiery bodies, or simply mounted upon them. See the next chapter.

καὶ ἐνεργείαις περιέχουσι τὰ σώματα· καὶ ὅτι οὐ πρὸς τὸ σῶμα ἐπιστρέ-  
φονται, ἀλλὰ τὸ σῶμα ἔχουσιν ἐπιστρεφόμενον εἰς τὴν θεῖαν αἰτίαν· καὶ  
ὅτι τὴν νοερὰν αὐτῶν καὶ ἀσώματον τελειότητα οὐκ ἐμποδίζει τὸ σῶμα  
οὐδὲ μεταξὺ παρεμπύπτον πράγματα αὐτῇ παρέχει· ὅθεν δὴ οὐδὲ δεῖται 5  
πλείονος ἐπιμελείας, αὐτοφυῶς δὲ καὶ τρόπον τινὰ αὐτοκινήτως συνέπε-  
ται, οὐκ αὐτουργικῆς δεόμενον ἐπιστασίας, τῇ δὲ πρὸς τὸ ἐν τῶν θεῶν  
ἀναγωγῇ καὶ αὐτὸ ὕφ' ἑαυτοῦ μονοειδῶς συνεπαιρόμενον.

Εἰ δὲ δεῖ καὶ τοῦτο εἰπεῖν, τὸ οὐράνιον σῶμα πρὸς αὐτὴν τὴν ἀσώ-  
ματον οὐσίαν τῶν θεῶν ἐστὶ συγγενέστατον. Μιᾶς μὲν γὰρ ἐκείνης οὐσης 10  
αὐτὸ ἀπλοῦν ἐστίν, ἀμερίστον δ' ἀδιαίρετον καὶ ἀτρέπτου ὡσαύτως ἀν-  
αλλοίωτον. Εἰ δὲ καὶ τὰς ἐνεργείας τις αὐτῶν μονοειδῶς ὑποτίθεται, καὶ  
τοῦτο ἔχει μίαν τὴν περιφορὰν· μιμεῖται δ' αὐτῶν καὶ τὴν ταυτότητα τῇ  
[52] κατὰ ταῦτα καὶ ὡσαύτως καὶ | πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ καθ' ἓνα λόγον καὶ μίαν 1  
τάξιν αἰδίῳ κινήσει, καὶ τὴν θεῖαν ζωὴν τῇ συμφύτῳ τοῖς αἰθερίοις σώ-  
μασι ζωῇ. Διόπερ οὐδ' ὥς ἐξ ἐναντίων καὶ διαφερόντων οὔτε τὸ σῶμα  
αὐτῶν συγκέκρται, ὥσπερ δὴ τὸ ἡμέτερον συνίσταται σῶμα, οὔτε ἡ ψυ-  
χὴ πρὸς τὸ σῶμα συνεπάγῃ εἰς ἐν ἐκ δύο ζῶον, ἀλλ' ὁμοία πάντα καὶ 5  
συννηγμένα δι' ὅλων τε ὅλα καὶ μονοειδῆ καὶ ἀσύνθετα τὰ κατ' οὐρανὸν  
τῶν θεῶν ἐστὶ ζῶα, τῶν μὲν γὰρ κρείττονων ἐν αὐτοῖς ἀεὶ ὑπερεχόντων  
ὡσαύτως, τῶν δ' ἐλαττόνων ἐξηρητημένων τῆς τῶν προτέρων ἀρχῆς καὶ  
οὐδέποτε αὐτὴν εἰς ἑαυτὰ κατατεινόντων, τῶν δ' ὅλων εἰς μίαν σύνταξιν  
καὶ μίαν συντέλειαν συναγομένων, καὶ τρόπον τινὰ πάντων ἀσωμάτων ὄν- 10  
των καὶ θεῶν δι' ὅλου, διότι τὸ θεῖον εἶδος ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐπικρατοῦν δι' ὅλων

[51].2 περιέχουσι i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: παρέχουσι VM || 12 τις V: om. M |  
μονοειδῶς VM: an μονοειδεῖς? || 14 κατὰ ταῦτα scripsi: κατ' αὐτὰ VM ||  
[52].2 αἰδίῳ κινήσει cj. Gale: αἰδίῳ κινήσεως VM || 3 διαφερόντων V: δια-  
φερόντως M || 6 ὅλων V: ὅλως M || 9 ὅλων cj. Gale: ὅλως VM

is they that envelop bodies;<sup>94</sup> and that they do not direct<sup>95</sup> themselves towards their respective body, but that they have a body which is directed towards its divine causal principle; and further, that this body does not interfere with their intellectual and incorporeal perfection, nor does it cause them trouble by getting in their way. Hence it does not require any particular care, but follows in the train (of the god) naturally and somehow by its own motion, not requiring any active supervision, but raised up together on its own initiative, unitarily, through the ascent of the gods to the One.

It must also be remarked that heavenly body<sup>96</sup> is closely akin to the incorporeal essence of the gods. For even as the latter is single, it also is simple, as it is without parts, so also it is indivisible, and as it is invariable, so also is it not subject to change. And if one postulates that the activities of the gods are uniform, this also has a single revolution. It also imitates their identity by its eternal movement according to the same principles, directed towards the same end and according to a single rationale and order, and their divine life by its life that is connate with the aetherial bodies. It is on this account that the body of the heavenly beings is not a mixture of opposed and differing elements, such as those from which our body is assembled, nor is their soul fixed in the body so as to make one living being out of two, but the gods of heaven are beings homogeneous in all respects, entirely united among themselves, uniform and non-composite; those among them who are superior are always uniformly dominant, while the inferior are dependent upon the rule of those prior to them, and yet never drag this power down to their own level; and so the totality of them is brought together into a single system and into a single perfection, and in a way all are incorporeal and all gods through and through,

<sup>94</sup> A fundamental principle asserted over and again in the *De mysteriis*. Cf. I.8.28.13–15; III.17.139; V.3.201.5–7.

<sup>95</sup> The use of ἐπιστρέφειν in the sense of relating to a lower entity is notable, since it was used by Plotinus to refer to the soul's "directing" itself towards a higher rather than a lower plane. However, see Plotinus, *Enn.* 4.3.4.23 of a turning towards things below (though the term is used in its usual sense just two lines further on!) and Porphyry, *Sent.* 7: "the soul is bound to the body through its attention (ἐπιστροφή) towards the passions which arise from it."

<sup>96</sup> That is to say, the corporeal substance of the heavenly bodies.

τὴν αὐτὴν πανταχοῦ ὅλην μίαν οὐσίαν ἐντίθησιν.

18 Οὕτω μὲν οὖν οἱ κατ' οὐρανὸν ἐμφανεῖς θεοὶ τέ εἰσι πάντες καὶ  
 τρόπον τινὰ ἁσώματοι· ἡ δ' ἐξῆς ἐπιζήτησις ἡ σὴ διαπορεῖ, πῶς αὐτῶν  
 [53] οἱ μὲν εἰσιν ἀγαθοποιοί, οἱ δὲ | κακοποιοί. Εἴληπται μὲν οὖν ἀπὸ τῶν 1  
 γενεθλιαλόγων αὕτη ἡ δόξα, πάντῃ δὲ διαμαρτάνει τοῦ ὄντος. Ἀγαθοί  
 τε γὰρ εἰσιν ἅπαντες καὶ ἀγαθῶν αἴτιοι ὡσαύτως, πρὸς ἓν τε ἀγαθὸν  
 ἀποβλέποντες ἐνοειδῶς περιάγονται κατὰ μόνον τὸ καλὸν καὶ ἀγαθόν. Οὐ  
 μὴν ἀλλὰ τὰ γε ὑποκείμενα αὐτοῖς σώματα καὶ αὐτὰ ἀμηχάνους ὅσας ἔχει 5  
 δυνάμεις, τὰς μὲν ἐν αὐτοῖς τοῖς θεοῖς σώμασι μονίμως ἐστώσας, τὰς δ'  
 ἀπ' αὐτῶν προϊούσας εἰς τὴν φύσιν τοῦ κόσμου καὶ αὐτὸν τὸν κόσμον,  
 δι' ὅλης τε τῆς γενέσεως ἐν τάξει κατιούσας, καὶ μέχρι τῶν κατὰ μέρος  
 διατεινούσας ἀκωλύτως.

Περὶ μὲν οὖν τῶν μενουσῶν κατ' οὐρανὸν ἐν τοῖς σώμασι τοῖς θεοῖς 10  
 δυνάμεων οὐκ ἂν τις ἀμφισβητήσειεν ὥς εἰσιν ὅμοιαι πᾶσαι· λοιπὸν οὖν  
 περὶ τῶν τῇδε καταπεμπομένων καὶ συμμειγνυμένων πρὸς τὴν γένεσιν διέλ-  
 θωμεν. Αὗται τοίνυν ἐπὶ μὲν σωτηρίᾳ τοῦ παντὸς διήκουνσιν ὡσαύτως καὶ  
 συνέχουσιν ὅλην τὴν γένεσιν κατὰ τὰ αὐτά· ἀπαθεῖς τέ εἰσι καὶ ἄτρεπτοι,  
 [54] καίτοι εἰς τὸ τρε|πόμενον καὶ πάσχον καθήκουσιν. Ἡ μέντοι γένεσις πο- 1  
 λυειδῆς οὕσα καὶ ἐκ διαφερόντων συνισταμένη τῇ οἰκείᾳ μὲν ἐναντιώσει  
 καὶ διαιρέσει μαχομένως καὶ μεριστῶς τὸ ἐν αὐτῶν καὶ ἀδιάφορον δέχε-  
 ται· παθητῶς δὲ χωρεῖ τὸ ἀπαθές, καὶ ὅλως κατὰ τὴν οἰκείαν φύσιν, οὐ  
 κατὰ τὴν ἐκείνων δύναμιν, πέφυκεν αὐτῶν μετέχειν. Ὡσπερ οὖν τὸ γι- 5  
 γνόμενον τοῦ ὄντος γεννητῶς καὶ τὸ σῶμα τοῦ ἁσωμάτου σωματοειδῶς  
 μεταλαμβάνει, οὕτω καὶ τὰ ἐν τῇ γενέσει φυσικὰ καὶ ἔνυλα τῶν ἀύλων  
 καὶ ὑπὲρ τὴν φύσιν καὶ γένεσιν αἰθερίων σωμάτων ἀτάκτως καὶ πλημμε-  
 λῶς ἔστιν ὅπου μεταλαμβάνει. Ἄτοποι οὖν οἱ τε χροῶμα καὶ σχῆμα καὶ

[53].3 τε<sup>2</sup> VM; τι cj. B || 7 αὐτῶν M et (v s. v.) V<sup>c</sup>: αὐτῶ V || [54].3-4  
 δέχεται V: μάχεται M

since the divine genus, being dominant in them throughout, establishes one and the same essence throughout the whole.

18 Thus, then, the entities visible in heaven are all gods, and all in a certain way incorporeal. In your next question, you ask, "How is it that some of them are beneficent, and others maleficent?" This belief is derived from the casters of horoscopes,<sup>97</sup> and is completely at odds with reality. For in fact all alike are good and causes of good, and looking towards one single good they direct themselves unitarily to the Fine and Good alone. Nonetheless, the very bodies subject to them possess a vast array of potencies, some themselves firmly established in the divine bodies, others proceeding from them into the nature of the cosmos and the actual cosmos,<sup>98</sup> descending in order through the whole realm of generation, and extending unhindered as far as individuals.

So then, as regards the potencies that remain in the heavens attached to the divine bodies, no one would dispute that they are all similar. It remains, therefore, to examine those that are projected down here and mingled with the realm of generation. Now it is for the preservation of the universe that these penetrate and likewise hold together in the same mode the whole realm of generation; they are impassive and unchanging, despite the fact that they are entering a realm of change and passion. Indeed, the realm of generation, multiform as it is, and constructed of diverse elements, receives not without a struggle and to a partial extent, by reason of the contrariness and divisiveness proper to it, their unity and freedom from differentiation; with passion it receives the impassive, and in general it is in accordance with its own nature, and not with their power, that it is naturally fitted to participate in them. So then, even as that which comes to be participates in being in a manner proper to becoming, and body in the bodiless in a corporeal manner, so too on occasion do physical and material entities in the realm of generation participate in immaterial and aetherial bodies superior to nature and generation in a disorderly and inharmonious manner.<sup>99</sup> While, therefore, it is odd of

<sup>97</sup> Plotinus takes very much the same view in *Enn.* 2.3.3-5.

<sup>98</sup> The distinction intended here may be between the immanent soul of the cosmos and the body of the cosmos.

<sup>99</sup> Employing, though in reverse order, a characteristic phrase from *Timaeus* 30a4-5, *πλημμελῶς καὶ ἀτάκτως*.

ἀφ' ἧν τοῖς νοητοῖς εἶδεσι προστιθέντες, διότι τὰ μεταλαμβάνοντα αὐτῶν 10  
εἰσι τοιαῦτα, καὶ οἱ τοῖς οὐρανίοις σώμασι κακίαν ἀνατιθέντες, διότι τὰ  
μετέχοντα αὐτῶν φύεται ἐνίοτε κακά. Τὴν ἀρχὴν γὰρ οὐδ' ἂν ἦν μετοχὴ  
τὸ τοιοῦτον, εἰ μή τι καὶ παραλλάττον εἶχε τὸ μεταλαμβάνον. Εἰ δ' ὥς ἐν  
[55] ἐτέρῳ καὶ διαφέροντι δέχεται | τὸ μετεχόμενον, τοῦτο δῆπου τὸ ὥς ἄλλο 1  
καὶ ἐν τοῖς περιγείοις ἐστὶ τὸ κακὸν καὶ ἄτακτον.

Ἡ τε οὖν μετάληψις αἰτία γίνεταί τῃς ἐν τοῖς δευτέροις πολλῆς ἐτε-  
ρότητος καὶ ἡ σύμμιξις τῶν ὑλικῶν πρὸς τὰς ἀύλους ἀπορροίας, καὶ ἔτι  
τὸ ἐτέρως διδόμενον ἐτέρως αὐτὰ τὰ τῇδε ὑποδέχεσθαι. Οἷον ἡ τοῦ Κρό- 5  
νου ἀπόρροιά ἐστι συνεκτική, ἡ δὲ τοῦ Ἄρεος κινητική· πλὴν ἐν γε τοῖς  
ἐνύλοις ἡ παθητὴ γενεσιουργὸς ὑποδοχὴ τὴν μὲν κατὰ πῆξιν καὶ ψυχρό-  
τητα ἐδέξατο, τὴν δὲ κατὰ φλόγῳσιν ὑπερβάλλουσαν τὸ μέτριον. Οὐκοῦν  
τὸ φθοροποιὸν καὶ ἀσύμμετρον διὰ τὴν τῶν ὑποδεχομένων ἐτεροποιὸν καὶ  
ὑλικὴν καὶ παθητὴν παρατροπὴν ἀπῆντησεν; ἔτι τοίνυν ἡ ἀσθένεια τῶν 10  
ἐνύλων καὶ περιγείων τόπων τὴν ἀκραιφνή δύναμιν καὶ τὴν καθαρωτά-  
την ζωὴν τῶν αἰθερίων μὴ χωροῦσα | τὸ ἐαυτῆς πάθημα μεταφέρει εἰς 1  
τὰ πρῶτα αἴτια· οἷον εἴ τις κάμων τῷ σώματι καὶ μὴ δυνάμενος φέρειν  
τὴν ἡλίου ζωοποιὸν θερμότητα ἐτόλμα ψευδόμενος ἐπικαλεῖν, ἀπὸ τῶν  
οἰκείων παθῶν, ὥς οὐ λυσιτελής ἐστι πρὸς ὑγίειαν ἢ ζωὴν.

Γένοιτο δ' ἂν τι καὶ τὸ τοιοῦτον ἐν τῇ τοῦ παντός ἀρμονίᾳ καὶ κρᾶ- 5  
σει, ὥς τὰ αὐτὰ τῷ μὲν ὅλῳ καὶ παντὶ σωτήρια εἶναι διὰ τὴν τελειότητα  
τῶν τε ἐνόντων καὶ οἷς ἔνεστι, τοῖς δὲ μέρεσι βλαβερά διὰ τὴν μεριστὴν  
ἀσύμμετρίαν. Καὶ ἐν τῇ τοῦ παντός οὖν κινήσει πᾶσαι μὲν αἰ περιφο-  
ραὶ τὸν πάντα κόσμον ὡσαύτως διαφυλάττουσιν, ἐν δέ τι τῶν ἐν μέρει

[55].5 αὐτὰ cj. Gale: αὐτάς VM || 11 τόπων secl. cj. Nock || [56].3  
ἐπικαλεῖν V: om. M || 4 λυσιτελής M: λυσιτελής V || 8-9 περιφοραὶ M et  
(ἐπ p. n., π s. v.) V<sup>c</sup>: ἐπιφοραὶ V

some people to attribute colour and shape and texture to intelligible forms, by reason of the fact that the things participating in them are of such a nature, similarly odd are those who attribute evil to the heavenly bodies, simply because those things participating in them sometimes turn out evil. For there would never have been any such thing as participation in the first place, if the participant had not some divergent element in it as well. And if it receives what is participated in as something other and different, it is just this element (the one that is other) that, in the terrestrial realm, is evil and disordered.

It is participation,<sup>100</sup> then, which becomes the cause of the proliferation of otherness in secondary entities, and also the intermingling of material elements with immaterial emanations, and further, the fact that what is bestowed in one way is received by the things of this realm in another way. For example, the emanation deriving from Saturn tends to pull things together, while that deriving from Mars<sup>101</sup> tends to provoke motion in them; however, at the level of material things, the passive generative receptacle receives the one as rigidity and coldness, and the other as a degree of inflammation exceeding moderation. So then, does not what causes decay and want of symmetry come about through the differentiating, material and passive deviance of the recipients? And further, since the feebleness of the material and earthly realm is not able fully to take in the unsullied power and pure life-force of aetherial entities, it transfers its own vulnerability to the primary causes; it is as if a sick person, who was not able to bear the life-giving heat of the sun, dared falsely to accuse it, because of his personal problems, of not being useful for health or life. Something of the same might be seen to come about in respect of the harmony and blending of the universe, in the sense that the same things might be salutary for the universe as a whole by reason of the perfection both of what is present in it and that which they are present in, while they might be harmful to particular parts by reason of the lack of symmetry characteristic of that level. And so it is that, in the motion of the universe as a whole, all the revolutions preserve the whole cosmos equally, whereas often one particular

<sup>100</sup> *μετάληψις* as a term for "participation" was used only once by Plato at *Parm.* 131a6, but was much favoured by Plotinus.

<sup>101</sup> Presumably it is planetary influences that are being referred to here, as the context would suggest.



πολλάκις θλίβεται ὑπ' ἄλλον μέρους, ὅπερ καὶ ἐν ὀρχήσει περιφανῶς ὁρῶ- 10  
μεν γιγνόμενον.

Πάλιν δὴ οὖν τὸ φθειρόμενον καὶ μεταβαλλόμενον πάθημα σύμφυ-  
τον γίγνεται τῶν κατὰ μέρος, καὶ οὐ δεῖ οὐδὲ τοῦτο τοῖς ὅλοις καὶ πρώτοις  
αἰτίοις ἀνατιθέναι ἢ ὥς ἐν αὐτοῖς ὃν ἢ ὥς ἀπ' αὐτῶν εἰς τὰ τῇδε καθήκον·  
[57] | διὰ δὴ τοσούτων ἀποδέδεικται ὥς οὔτε αὐτοὶ οἱ ἐν οὐρανῷ θεοὶ οὔτε αἱ 1  
δόσεις αὐτῶν εἰσι κακοποιοί.

19 Ἴθι δὴ οὖν κἀκεῖνο ἀποκρινώμεθα, τί τὸ συνάπτον ἐστὶ πρὸς  
τοῖς ἀσωμάτοις θεοῖς τοὺς ἔχοντας σῶμα ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ. Ἦδη μὲν οὖν  
ἀπὸ τῶν προειρημένων καὶ τοῦτο καταφαίνεται· εἰ γὰρ ὥς ἀσώματοι καὶ 5  
νοητοὶ καὶ ἡνωμένοι τῶν οὐρανίων σφαιρῶν ἐπιβεβήκασιν, ἀρχὰς ἔχουσιν  
ἐν τῷ νοητῷ, καὶ νοοῦντες τὰ θεῖα αὐτῶν εἶδη κατενθύνουσι τὸν σύμ-  
παντα οὐρανὸν κατὰ μίαν ἀπειρον ἐνέργειαν· καὶ εἰ χωριστῶς τῷ οὐρανῷ  
παρόντες ἄγουσι μόναις ταῖς ἑαυτῶν βουλήσεσι τὰς αἰδίους περιφοράς,  
ἀμιγεῖς ὑπάρχουσι καὶ αὐτοὶ πρὸς τὸ αἰσθητὸν καὶ τοῖς νοητοῖς θεοῖς 10  
συνυπάρχουσιν.

Πλὴν οὐδὲν οἶον καὶ κατ' ἰδίαν διαπραγματεύσασθαι τὴν παροῦσαν  
ἀπόκρισιν ὧδέ πως. Λέγω δὴ οὖν ὥς ἀπὸ τῶν νοητῶν θεῶν παραδειγμα-  
των καὶ περὶ αὐτὰ ἀπογεννᾶται τὰ ἐμφανῆ τῶν θεῶν ἀγάλματα, γενόμενά  
[58] τε παντελῶς ἐν αὐτοῖς ἰδρυνται, καὶ πρὸς αὐτὰ ἀνήκουσαν | ἔχει τὴν ἀπ' 1  
αὐτῶν ἀποτελεσθεῖσαν εἰκόνα· ἐτέρως τε τὰ αὐτὰ ἄλλην διακόσμησιν δε-  
δημιούργηται, συνεχῇ τέ ἐστὶ τὰ τῇδε πρὸς ἐκεῖνα κατὰ μίαν ἔνωσιν, καὶ

[56].14 αὐτοῖς cj. Gale: αὐτῷ VM || [57].7 αὐτῶν scripsi: ἑαυτῶν V  
αὐτῶν M || 15 αὐτὰ i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: αὐτὴν VM

being is jostled by another, as we often see clearly happening in a dance.<sup>102</sup>

So once again, the experience of perishing and undergoing change is an innate characteristic of individual beings, and one must not attribute this either to the general and primary causes, either as being inherent in them, or as descending from them to this realm. And that, I conclude, is sufficient to demonstrate that neither the gods in heaven nor their gifts are causative of any evil.

**19** Now then, let us respond also to this question: “What is it that attaches those entities possessing a body in the heavens to the incorporeal gods?” After what we have said previously, the answer to this also should emerge plainly; for if they are mounted on the heavenly spheres as incorporeal and intelligible and unified entities, they have their originating principles in the intelligible, and it is by thinking their own divine forms that they direct the totality of the heavens through a single infinite act. And if, being present transcendentally in the heavens, they guide the eternal revolutions merely by their own wills, they themselves remain unmixed with the sensible realm, and partake in the mode of existence of the intelligible gods. But there is nothing like giving a specific answer to the present question, as follows. I say, then, that arising from the intelligible divine models and around them there are engendered the visible images of the gods,<sup>103</sup> and that when once brought into being they are wholly established in them, and hold directed towards them the image of them which they have perfected in themselves. It is both the case that, while remaining the same in a different mode they have fashioned another order of being, and the things of this realm are in continuity with those

<sup>102</sup> This imagery of the dance features interestingly in Plotinus, *Enn.* 2.9.7.33ff. in a context very similar to the present one: “but if any of the parts of the universe is moved according to its nature, the parts with whose nature the movement is not in accord suffer, but those which are moved go on well, as parts of the whole; but the others are destroyed, because they are not able to endure the order of the whole; as if when a great company of dancers was moving in order a tortoise was caught in the middle of its advance and trampled because it was not able to get out of the way of the ordered movement of the dancers: yet if it had ranged itself with that movement, it would have taken no harm from them” (trans. Armstrong, LCL). It is tempting to conjecture that “Abamon” may have had this passage in mind.

<sup>103</sup> That is to say, the heavenly bodies. For the terminology, cf. Plato, *Epin.* 984a.

τὰ μὲν παρόντα θεῖα νοερά εἶδη τοῖς ὁρωμένοις σώμασι τῶν θεῶν χω-  
ριστῶς αὐτῶν προϋπάρχει· τὰ δ' ἄμικτα καὶ ὑπερουράνια αὐτῶν νοητὰ 5  
παραδείγματα μένει καθ' ἑαυτὰ ἐνὶ ὁμοῦ πάντα κατὰ τὴν διαιωνίαν αὐ-  
τῶν ὑπερβολήν.

Ἔστι μὲν οὖν καὶ κατὰ τὰς νοεράς ἐνεργείας ὁ κοινὸς σύνδεσμος αὐ-  
τῶν ἀδιαίρετος, ἔστι δὲ καὶ κατὰ τὰς τῶν εἰδῶν κοινὰς μετουσίαις, ἐπεὶ  
οὐδὲν διείργει ταύτας, οὐδ' ἔστι τι αὐτῶν μεταξὺ· οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὴ 10  
ἡ ἄνλος οὐσία καὶ ἀσώματος, οὔτε τόποις οὔτε ὑποκειμένοις διισταμέ-  
νη οὔτε μερῶν μερισταῖς διωρισμένη περιγραφαῖς, εὐθὺς συνέρχεται καὶ  
συμφύεται εἰς ταυτότητα, ἥ τε ἀφ' ἐνὸς πρόοδος καὶ εἰς ἐν τῶν ὅλων ἀν-  
αγωγή καὶ τοῦ ἐνὸς πάντη ἐπικράτεια συνάγει τὴν κοινωνίαν τῶν ἐν τῷ  
κόσμῳ θεῶν πρὸς τοὺς ἐν τῷ νοητῷ προϋπάρχοντας. 15

[59] | Ἔτι δ' ἡ τῶν δευτέρων πρὸς τὰ πρῶτα νοερά ἐπιστροφὴ καὶ 1  
ἀπὸ τῶν προτέρων εἰς τοὺς δευτέρους θεοὺς δόσις τῆς αὐτῆς οὐσίας καὶ  
δυνάμεως συνέχει τὴν εἰς ἐν αὐτῶν σύνοδον ἀδιάλυτον. Ἐπὶ μὲν τῶν ἑτε-  
ρουσίων οἷον ψυχῆς καὶ σώματος, καὶ τῶν ἀνομοειδῶν ὥσπερ τῶν ἐνύλων  
εἰδῶν καὶ τῶν ἄλλως ὅπως οὖν κεχωρισμένων, ἡ συμφυῆς ἔνωσις ἐπί- 5  
κτητός τε παραγίνεται ἀπὸ τῶν ἄνωθεν καὶ ἀποβλητὴ κατὰ χρόνων  
περιόδους ὥρισμένας· ὅσῳ δ' ἂν ἀνίωμεν ἐπὶ τὸ ὕψος καὶ τὴν ταυτότητα  
τῶν πρῶτων κατὰ τὸ εἶδος τε καὶ τὴν οὐσίαν, ἀπὸ τε τῶν μερῶν ἐπὶ τὰ  
ὅλα ἀναγάγωμεν ἑαυτούς, τοσούτῳ πλέον τὴν ἔνωσιν τὴν αἰδίον ὑπάρχου-  
σαν εὐρίσκομεν, προηγουμένην τε αὐτὴν καὶ κυριωτέραν θεωροῦμεν καὶ 10  
περὶ ἑαυτὴν καὶ ἐν ἑαυτῇ ἔχουσαν τὴν ἑτερότητα καὶ τὸ πλήθος. Ἐπὶ δέ  
γε τῶν θεῶν ἐν τῇ ἐνώσει πάντων ἔστιν ἡ τάξις, τὰ τε πρῶτα καὶ δεύτερα  
αὐτῶν γένη καὶ τὰ περὶ αὐτὰ φυόμενα πολλὰ ἐν ἐνὶ τὰ ὅλα συνυφέστηκε,  
[60] τό τε | πᾶν ἐν αὐτοῖς ἔστι τὸ ἐν, ἀρχή τε καὶ μέσα καὶ τέλη κατ' αὐτὸ τὸ 1  
ἐν συνυπάρχει· ὥστ' ἐπὶ γε τούτων οὐδὲ χρὴ ζητεῖν πόθεν τὸ ἐν ἅπασιν  
ἐφήκει· αὐτὸ γὰρ ὃ τί ποτέ ἐστιν ἐν αὐτοῖς τὸ εἶναι, τοῦτο αὐτῶν ὑπάρχει

[58].6 ἐνὶ VM: ἐν ἐνὶ (ἐν i. m.) V<sup>2</sup> || 13 τῶν V: αὐτῶν M; an αὐ-  
τῶν? || [59].8 τε<sup>1</sup> V: γε M || 9 τοσούτῳ cj. Velsenius: τοῦτῳ VM || 9-10  
ὑπάρχουσιν cj. B: ἐπάρχουσιν VM || 11 ἐπὶ VM: ἐπεὶ cj. B || 13 αὐτὰ (α  
s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: αὐτὸ VM || 14 τό τε M et (o ex α) V<sup>2</sup>: τὰ τε V || [60].3 ἐφήκει  
M: ἐφίκει V | αὐτῶν M et (v s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: αὐτῷ V

of the higher realm by virtue of a single unity, and the divine intellectual forms present in the visible bodies of the gods, have a separate existence prior to them; while as for their intelligible models, they remain in themselves, unmixed and supra-celestial, all together<sup>104</sup> in one in virtue of their eternal superiority.

So then, in their intellectual acts also their common bond is indivisible, as it is equally in their common participation in the forms, since nothing separates these, and there is nothing between them; nay rather, the immaterial and incorporeal essence itself, being neither set apart by differences of position nor substratum, nor divided by individual boundaries of parts, straightway comes together and fuses into identity, and the procession from unity and the ascent of all things to unity, and the universal domination of the One, brings about the communion of the gods in the cosmos with those pre-existing in the intelligible realm.

And further, the intellectual conversion of secondary entities towards the primary, and the gift to the secondary gods from their priors of the same essence and potency brings about the indissoluble coming-together of these into unity. In the case of entities of differing substance such as soul and body, and of heterogeneous entities such as forms in matter and those which are in whatever way separate, their natural union comes about as something acquired from the realms above, and subject to loss over definite periods of time. The more we ascend to the heights and to identity with the primal entities in form and essence, and the more we raise ourselves up from particulars to universals, the more we discover the eternal union that exists there, and behold it as pre-eminent and dominant and containing about it and within it otherness and multiplicity.

In the case of the gods, their order consists in the union of all, their primary and secondary classes and all the multitude which is generated around them constitute all together a totality in unity, and the totality is the unity, and their beginning and middle and end coexist in the very mode of unity; so that in respect of them, at any rate, there is no need to enquire whence unity comes upon them all; for whatever being may actually be in their case, it is this that constitutes their unity. The secondary

<sup>104</sup> Employing again here the favourite Plotinian term for the realm of *Noûs*, that is, *ὁμοῦ πάντων*, borrowed from Anaxagoras.

τὸ ἔν· καὶ τὰ μὲν δεύτερα μένει κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ ἐν τῷ ἐνὶ τῶν πρώτων, τὰ δὲ πρῶτα δίδωσι τοῖς δευτέροις τὴν ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν ἔνωσιν, πάντα δ' ἐν 5 ἀλλήλοις κοινωνίαν ἔχει τῆς ἀδιαλύτου συμπλοκῆς.

Ἀπὸ δὲ ταύτης τῆς αἰτίας καὶ τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς θεοῖς σώματα ἔχουσιν οἱ παντελῶς ἀσώματοι θεοὶ συνήρῳνται. Οἱ τε γὰρ ἐμφανεῖς θεοὶ σωμά- των εἰσιν ἔξω, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο εἰσιν ἐν τῷ νοητῷ, καὶ οἱ νοητοὶ διὰ τὴν ἄπειρον αὐτῶν ἔνωσιν περιέχουσιν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς τοὺς ἐμφανεῖς, ἀμφοτέρω 10 τε κατὰ κοινὴν ἔνωσιν καὶ μίαν ἐνέργειαν ἴστανται ὡσαύτως. Καὶ τοῦτο τῆς τῶν θεῶν αἰτίας καὶ διακοσμήσεώς ἐστιν ἐξαίρετον, διόπερ ἄνωθεν [61] μέχρι τοῦ τέλους τῆς θείας τάξεως ἡ αὐτὴ διήκει πάντων ἔνωσις. Εἰ | δὴ 1 τοῦτο ἄξιον ἀμφισβητεῖν· τοῦναντίον γὰρ ἂν ἦν θαυμαστόν, εἰ μὴ οὕτως εἶχεν.

Καὶ περὶ μὲν τῆς συναφῆς τῶν αἰσθητῶν θεῶν ἰδρυμένων πρὸς τοὺς νοητοὺς θεοὺς τοσαῦτα εἰρήσθω· 20 τὸ δὲ μετὰ τοῦτο τὰς αὐτὰς ἐρω- 5 τήσεις ἐπαναλαμβάνεις αὖτις, περὶ ὧν ἥρκει μὲν τὰ προειρημένα ἀρτίως εἰς διάλυσιν ὧν ἐπεζήτησας. Ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ δεῖ τὰ καλὰ, ὥς φασι, πολλάκις λέγειν τε καὶ ἐπισκοπεῖν, οὐδ' ἡμεῖς ὑπερβησόμεθα ταῦτα ὡς ἥδη τετυ- χηκότες ἱκανῆς ἀποκρίσεως· τρίβοντες δὲ αὐτὰ πολλάκις διὰ τῶν λόγων, τάχα ἂν ἐξ ἀπάντων τέλειόν τι καὶ μέγα ἀγαθὸν εἰς ἐπιστήμην κτησαί- 10 μεθα. Ἀπορεῖς γὰρ δὴ τί τὸ διακρινόν ἐστι τοὺς δαίμονας ἀπὸ τε τῶν ἐμφανῶν καὶ τῶν ἀφανῶν θεῶν, ἀφανεῖς μὲν, συνημμένων δὲ τῶν ἐμπα- νῶν θεῶν τοῖς ἀφανέσιν. Ἐγὼ δὲ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τοῦδε πρώτου ἀρχόμενος τὸ διάφορον αὐτῶν παραδεικνύω. Διότι γὰρ οἱ μὲν εἰσι συνημμένοι πρὸς τοὺς [62] νοητοὺς θεοὺς καὶ αὐτὴν τὴν ἰδέαν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἔχοντες, οἱ δὲ πόρρωθεν | 1

[60].4 τὰ αὐτὰ M: αὐτὰ V || [61].2 ἦν M: ἦ V || 12 καὶ τῶν M et i. m. V<sup>c</sup>: om. V | ἀφανῶν M et i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: om. V || 14 παραδεικνύω M: παραδεικνύων V

(gods) remain on the same terms in the unity of the primary ones, and the primary ones give to their secondaries the unity proper to themselves, and all possess with each other a communion of indissoluble connection.

For this reason, then, the completely incorporeal gods are united to the visible gods who have bodies. For the visible gods are outside their bodies, and for this reason are in the intelligible realm, and the intelligible gods, by reason of their infinite unity, embrace within themselves the visible ones, and both take their stand alike according to a common unity and a single activity. And this is a distinctive characteristic of the causative and ordering activity of the gods, and is the reason why the same unity of them all extends from the top to the bottom of the divine order—if indeed all this is worth disputing about; for, on the contrary, it would have been astonishing if this had not been the case.

So much, then, may be said about the connection of the visible gods, established in their seats, with the intelligible gods.

**20** After this, you take up again the same subjects of enquiry, about which our previous comments should be sufficient to resolve your difficulties. But since, as they say, “good things bear repeating—and examining—often,”<sup>105</sup> we in our turn will not pass over these points as if having already made an adequate response. Perhaps, indeed, by rubbing them together<sup>106</sup> repeatedly in discussion, we may ultimately acquire some complete and substantial contribution to knowledge. You ask, then, “what it is that distinguishes the daemons from the visible and the invisible gods respectively, seeing that they are invisible, and that the visible gods are linked to the invisible ones?” I will begin from this very point in demonstrating to you the difference between them. For it is because the former<sup>107</sup> are linked to the intelligible gods and possess their very form in dependence on them, while the

<sup>105</sup> This was a well-known proverb, turning up (in surviving literature) first in Empedocles (frg. 25 D–K), but “Abamon” is thinking primarily of *Gorgias* 498e, since he reproduces the language of that passage almost verbatim. The proverb is also referred to at *Philebus* 60a, but the verbal analogy is not so close.

<sup>106</sup> The use of *τρίβοντες* here may embody a reference to the well-known passage of Plato’s seventh letter (344b), where both the verb and the noun are used.

<sup>107</sup> Namely, the visible gods.

αὐτῶν ἀφροσθηκότες κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν καὶ μόλις δι' ὁμοιότητος αὐτοῖς ἀπ-  
 εικαζόμενοι, διὰ τοῦτο δὴ κεχωρισμένοι τῶν ἐμφανῶν θεῶν εἰσι δαίμονες.  
 Τῶν δ' ἀφανῶν θεῶν διεστήκασιν κατ' αὐτὴν τὴν τοῦ ἀφανοῦς διαφοράν·  
 οἱ μὲν γὰρ δαίμονες ἀόρατοί τε εἰσι καὶ οὐδαμῶς αἰσθήσει περιληπτοί, 5  
 οἱ δὲ καὶ λόγου γνώσεως καὶ νοήσεως ἐνύλου προέχουσι· καὶ διότι τού-  
 τοις εἰσὶν ἄγνωστοι καὶ ἀφανεῖς, οὕτως ἐπονομάζονται πολὺν διαφερόντως  
 ἢ ὥς ἐπὶ τῶν δαιμόνων λέγεται τὸ ἀφανές. Τί οὖν; τῶν ἐμφανῶν θεῶν  
 ἀφανεῖς ὄντες ἔχουσι κρείττον καθ' ὅσον εἰσὶν ἀφανεῖς; οὐ μὲν οὖν· τὸ  
 γὰρ θεῖον, ὅπου ποτ' ἂν ἦ καὶ ἦντιν' ἂν ἔχη λῆξιν, τὴν αὐτὴν ἔχει δύναμιν 10  
 καὶ ἐπικράτειαν τῶν ὑποτεταγμένων ὅλων. Οὐκοῦν καὶ ἐμφανὲς ἦ, τῶν  
 ἀφανῶν ὡσαύτως ἐπάρχει δαιμόνων, καὶ παρὰ γῆν ὑπάρχει, τῶν ἀερίων  
 βασιλεύει δαιμόνων. Οὐ γὰρ ὁ τόπος ὁ δεχόμενος οὐδ' ἡ τοῦ κόσμου μερὶς  
 ποιεῖ τινα μεταβολὴν εἰς τὴν τῶν θεῶν ἀρχήν· μένει δ' ἡ αὐτὴ πανταχοῦ  
 [63] τῶν | θεῶν ὅλη ἡ οὐσία ἀδιαίρετός τε καὶ ἀναλλοίωτος, ἣν σέβει πάντα 1  
 ὁμοίως τὰ ὑποδεέστερα τῇ κατὰ φύσιν τάξει.

Ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς αὐτῆς ἀφορμῆς ἐπιόντες καὶ ἄλλην εὐρίσκομεν αὐτῶν  
 διαφοράν. Οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐμφανεῖς τε καὶ ἀφανεῖς θεοὶ τὴν ὅλην ἐν ἑαυτοῖς 5  
 συνειλήφασιν κυβένησιν τῶν ὄντων κατὰ πάντα τε τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ κόσμον  
 καὶ κατὰ τὰς ἀφανεῖς ἐν τῷ παντὶ δυνάμεις ὅλας· οἱ δὲ τὴν δαιμονίαν ἐπ-  
 ιστασίαν διαλαχόντες, μοίρας τινὰς μεριστὰς τοῦ κόσμου κατατεινόμενοι,  
 ταύτας κατευθύνουσιν, ἔχουσί τε καὶ αὐτοὶ μεριστὸν τὸ τῆς οὐσίας εἶδος  
 καὶ δυνάμεως. Καὶ ἔτι συμφνεῖς πῶς εἰσι καὶ ἀχώριστοι τῶν ὑφ' ἑαν- 10  
 τῶν διοικουμένων· οἱ δὲ θεοί, καὶ σωμάτων ἐπιβαίνουσι, παντελῶς εἰσιν  
 ἀπ' αὐτῶν κεχωρισμένοι. Οὐ τὸ σωμάτων οὖν ἐπιμελεῖσθαι φέρει τινα  
 ἐλάττωσιν οἷς ὑπηρετεῖ τὸ σῶμα, καὶ συνέχεται ὑπὸ τοῦ κρείττονος καὶ

[62].4 θεῶν M: om. V || 6 λόγου VM: λόγους et λόγον i. m. V<sup>2</sup> |  
 ἐνύλου M: ἐνύλους V | προέχουσι (σ p. n.) V<sup>2</sup>: προσέχουσι VM || 9 ἀφανεῖς<sup>2</sup>  
 M et (μ p. n.) V<sup>2</sup>: ἀμφανεῖς V || 10 ἦ V: ἦν M | ἦντινα scr. Parthey: ἄντινα  
 VM || 12 παρὰ: an περί? || [63].7 κατατεινόμενοι VM: κατανειμάμενοι i.  
 m. V<sup>2</sup> (cf. 85, 6) || 10 ἐπιβαίνουσι M: ἐπιβαίνουσι V

others<sup>108</sup> are far removed from them in essence and only just resemble them because of some likeness; for this reason, then, the daemons are distinct from the invisible gods. And they are different from the invisible gods according to their own manner of invisibility: for while the daemons are certainly imperceptible and can in no way be apprehended through the senses, the others<sup>109</sup> are beyond the reach of our understanding through reason and the intellection that is of the material world. And because, in these respects, they are unknowable and invisible, they are named in this way, although they only minimally resemble the way that invisibility is predicated of daemons. Well then, since they are invisible, may they be regarded as superior, in respect of that invisibility, to the visible gods? No, they may not; for the divine, no matter where it may be and what its assigned role, retains the same power and dominance over what is subordinate to it. So even if it is visible, it nonetheless exercises rule over the invisible daemons, and even if it is assigned to the earth, it still rules over the daemons of the air. For neither the place that is their receptacle nor the part of the cosmos assigned to them brings about any alteration in the ruling status of the gods. The entire essence of the gods remains everywhere identically indivisible and unalterable, and is worshipped as such alike by all its subordinates according to the order of nature.

Moving on from the same point of departure, we discover a further difference between them. The visible and invisible gods have taken to themselves the whole government of existent things both throughout the whole heaven and cosmos, and over all the invisible powers on the universe; while those who have been assigned the type of administration proper to daemons extend their influence over certain restricted portions of the cosmos and administer these, they possess in themselves only a partial form of essence and power. And further, they are to some extent of the same nature as, and inseparable from, those things that they administer; whereas the gods, even if they mount themselves on bodies, nevertheless are entirely distinct from them. So then, the bare fact of concerning oneself with bodies does not result in any diminution in status for those who have a body at their service;

<sup>108</sup> Namely, the daemons.

<sup>109</sup> Namely, the invisible gods.



ἐπέστραπται πρὸς αὐτὸ καὶ οὐδὲν ἐμπόδιον αὐτῷ παρέχει· ἀλλὰ τὸ τῇ  
 [64] γενεσιουργῷ φύσει προσκείσθαι καὶ μερίζεσθαι παρ' αὐτὴν ἐξ ἀνάγκης 1  
 καταδεεστέραν μοῖραν δίδωσι τοῖς δαίμοσιν· ὅλως δὲ τὸ μὲν θεῖόν ἐστιν  
 ἡγεμονικὸν καὶ προϊστάμενον τῆς ἐν τοῖς οὐσι διατάξεως, διακονικὸν δὲ  
 τὸ δαιμόνιον καὶ παραδεχόμενον ἅπερ ἂν παραγγείλωσιν οἱ θεοὶ προθύ- 5  
 μως, αὐτουργία τε χρώμενον περὶ ὧν οἱ θεοὶ νοοῦσί τε καὶ βούλονται  
 καὶ ἐπιτάττουσιν. Τοιγαροῦν οἱ θεοὶ τῶν ῥεπουσῶν εἰς τὴν γένεσιν δυ-  
 νάμεων εἰσιν ἀπηλλαγμένοι· δαίμονες δὲ τούτων οὐ πάντη καθαρεύουσιν.  
 Τοσαῦτα δὴ οὖν περὶ τῆσδε τῆς κρίσεως προσεθήκαμεν καὶ οἰόμεθα ἅπ'  
 ἀμφοτέρων, τῶν τε ἔμπροσθεν καὶ τῶν νῦν ἐφόδων, γνωριμωτέραν αὐτὴν  
 καθεστηκέναι. 10

21 Ἦν δὲ σὺ ἀναιρεῖς διαίρεσιν τὴν τοῦ ἐμπαθοῦς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀπα-  
 thoῦς ἴσως μὲν ἂν τις παραιτήσαιοτο, ὥς οὐδετέρῳ τῶν κρείττωνων γενῶν  
 ἐφαρμόζουσιν, δι' ἧς ἔμπροσθεν εἰρήκαμεν αἰτίας· οὐ μὴν διὰ τοῦτο γε  
 [65] αὐτὴν ἀνατρέπειν ἄξιον, διότι ἐξήλεγκται ἐκ τῶν ὥς ἐμπαθεῖς ὄντας 1  
 δρωμένων. Ποία γὰρ ἀγιστεία καὶ κατὰ νόμους ἱερατικὸς θεραπεία δρω-  
 μένη διὰ πάθους γίγνεται, ἢ παθῶν τινα ἀποπλήρωσιν ἐμποιεῖ; οὐχ αὕτη  
 μὲν κατὰ θεσμοὺς θεῶν νοερώς τε κατ' ἀρχὰς ἐνομοθετήθη; μιμεῖται δὲ  
 τὴν τῶν θεῶν τάξιν, τὴν τε νοητὴν καὶ τὴν ἐν οὐρανῷ. Ἐχει δὲ μέτρα τῶν 5  
 ὄντων αἰδία καὶ ἐνθήματα θαυμαστά, οἷα ἀπὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ καὶ πατρὸς

[63].13 αὐτὸ (ἡν p. n., ο s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: αὐτὴν VM || [64].3 τῆς V: τοῖς M  
 || 5 αὐτουργία τε (v et alt. o p. n., τε i. m.) V<sup>2</sup>: αὐτουργίαν τὸ VM | περὶ  
 cj. i. m. B<sup>4</sup>: πᾶσι περὶ V πᾶσι M || 8 κρίσεως VM: διακρίσεως cj. Gale ||  
 11 σὺ ἀναιρεῖς VM: συναναιρεῖς cj. BU συναινεῖς cj. Parthey || 13 οὐ VM:  
 καὶ cj. Gale || 14 ὥς VM: ὥς εἰς (εἰς add. i. m.) V<sup>2</sup> || [65].6 ἐνθήματα ]  
 συνθήματα cj. Gale

rather, the body is given coherence by the superior power, and turns itself towards it, and provides no obstacle to it. But it is attachment to generative nature, and necessarily suffering division because of that, that bestows an inferior rank upon daemons. In general, then, the divine exercises its rule and presides over the structure of existent things, while the daemonic is in service, and willingly takes on whatever the gods command, putting its hand to whatever the gods conceive and wish and command. The gods, then, are removed from those powers which incline towards generation;<sup>110</sup> daemons, on the other hand, are not entirely uncontaminated by these. This, then, is as much as we have seen fit to add on this question, and we consider that on the basis of both approaches to it, both the former and the present ones, we have made the issues clearer.

**21** As for the attempt you make to remove the distinction between the passible and impassible, one may beg leave to reject this, as not fitting any of the higher classes of being, for the reasons which we have just stated. It does,<sup>111</sup> however, seem to call for explicit refutation, because it bases its proof on the argument that the rituals are performed in the way they are on the assumption that the gods are subject to passions. What ritual, after all, and what cult celebrated according to hieratic laws, is there which is accomplished by the utilisation of passion, or which produces some satisfaction of passions? Was not this cult established by law at the beginning intellectually, according to the ordinances of the gods? It imitates the order of the gods, both the intelligible and that in the heavens. It possesses eternal measures of what truly exists and wondrous tokens,<sup>112</sup> such as have been sent down hither by the creator and father of all, by means of which

<sup>110</sup> This phrase *ῥέπειν εἰς τὴν γένεσιν* recurs elsewhere in Iamblichus: see ap. Stobaeus 2:174.25. At *Comm. Tim.* frg. 16 Dillon we find the phrase *τῶν εἰς σώματα ῥεπουσῶν ψυχῶν*. Cf. also ap. Stobaeus 2:229.8. Plotinus sometimes uses *ῥέπειν*, though he prefers *νεύειν* as, it seems, do the *Chaldaean Oracles* (see frg. 163; 164).

<sup>111</sup> We are tempted here by Thomas Gale's conjecture *καὶ μὴν* for *οὐ μὴν*, for it is difficult to get the required sense out of the negative. Des Places, who preserves the *οὐ*, seems to derive quite the wrong sense from the sentence.

<sup>112</sup> Accepting Gale's conjecture *συνθήματα* for the more or less meaningless *ἐνθήματα* of the MSS. This no doubt refers to the various magical substances and combinations of substances that form the basis for theurgic practice.

τῶν ὅλων δεῦρο καταπεμφθέντα, οἷς καὶ τὰ μὲν ἀφθεγκτα διὰ συμβόλων ἀπορρήτων ἐκφωνεῖται, τὰ δὲ ἀνειδέα κρατεῖται ἐν εἵδεσι, τὰ δὲ πάσης εἰκόνης κρείττονα δι' εἰκόνων ἀποτυποῦται, πάντα δὲ διὰ θείας αἰτίας μόνης ἐπιτελεῖται, ἥτις τοσοῦτον κεχώριται τῶν παθῶν, ὥστε μηδὲ λόγον 10 αὐτῆς δυνατὸν εἶναι ἐφάπτεσθαι.

Σχεδὸν οὖν καὶ τοῦτο αἷτιον γέγονε τῆς ἐπὶ τὰ πάθη τῶν ἐπινοιῶν παρατροπῆς. Ἀδύνατοι γὰρ ὄντες αὐτῶν οἱ ἀνθρώποι λογισμῷ τὴν γνῶσιν ἐπιλαβεῖν νομίζοντες δ' εἶναι δυνατὸν φέρονται ὅλοι πρὸς τὰ οἰκεῖα ἑαυτῶν [66] τὰ | ἀνθρώπινα πάθη, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν παρ' ἑαυτοῖς τὰ θεῖα τεκμαίρονται. 1 Διαμαρτάνουσι τοίνυν αὐτῶν διχῇ, καὶ διότι τῶν θείων ἀποπίπτουσι καὶ διότι τούτων ἀποτυγχάνοντες ἐπὶ τὰ ἀνθρώπινα αὐτὰ πάθη καθέλκουσιν. Ἐχρῆν δέ γε καὶ τῶν ὡσαύτως δρωμένων πρὸς θεοὺς καὶ ἀνθρώπους, οἷον προκυλίσεων προσκνήσεων δωρεῶν ἀπαρχῶν, μὴ τὸν αὐτὸν ὑπολαμβάνειν 5 τρόπον ἐπ' ἀμφοτέρων, κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἐπὶ τὰ τιμιώτερα διαφορὰν χωρὶς τιθέναι ἐκάτερα, καὶ τὰ μὲν ὡς θεῖα ἀποσεμνύνειν, τὰ δ' ὡς ἀνθρώπινα ἡγεῖσθαι εὐκαταφρόνητα, καὶ τῶν μὲν πάθει διδόναι τὴν ἀπεργασίαν τῶν τε ποιούντων καὶ πρὸς οὓς γίνονται (ἀνθρώπινα γάρ ἐστι καὶ σωματοει- 10 δῆ), τῶν δὲ διὰ θαύματος ἀτρέπτου καὶ σεμνῆς καταστάσεως νοεράς τε χαρᾶς καὶ βεβαίας γνώμης ἀπεργαζομένων τιμᾶν διαφερόντως τὴν ἐνέργειαν, ἐπειδὴ τοῖς θεοῖς ἀνατίθεται.

unutterable truths are expressed through secret symbols, beings beyond form brought under the control of form, things superior to all image reproduced through images, and all things brought to completion through one single divine cause, which itself so far transcends passions that reason is not even capable of grasping it.

This, also, is probably why our conceptions are led astray in the direction of the passions. For humans, being incapable of attaining knowledge of these things by the aid of reasoning,<sup>113</sup> but thinking that this is possible, are borne entirely towards the human passions that are familiar to them, and on the basis of their own condition make conjectures about that of the gods. However, they err here in two respects, both because they hereby fall away from the divine, and because, in failing to attain this, they drag it down to the level of human passions. They should not, after all, in the case of actions performed alike to gods and humans, such as acts of prostration, adoration, and the offering of gifts or of tithes, interpret these in the same way in both cases, but they should distinguish each on the basis of the difference in status of the recipients, and revere the former as divine, but regard the latter as of little account, as being human; to attribute success in the latter case to the exercise of passion on the part both of those who perform the actions and of those who are the recipients of them (for they are human and corporeal), while in the case of those which are performed with unswerving reverence and a holy attitude of mind, with intellectual joy and firm will, to grant especial honour to their performance, since they are dedicated to the gods.

<sup>113</sup> Accepting, with Des Places, Saffrey's conjecture λογισμῶ for the λογισμῶν of the MSS.

## II

[67] | **1** Δεῖ δὲ δὴ καὶ τοῦτο προσαποδειχθῆναι σοι, δαίμων ἥρωος **1**  
καὶ ψυχῆς τίνι κατ' οὐσίαν διαφέρει ἢ κατὰ δύναμιν ἢ ἐνέργειαν. Λέγω  
τοῖνυν δαίμονας μὲν κατὰ τὰς γεννητικὰς καὶ δημιουργικὰς τῶν θεῶν δυ-  
νάμεις ἐν τῇ πορρωτάτῳ τῆς προόδου ἀποτελεωτήσῃ καὶ τῶν ἐσχάτων  
διαμερισμῶν παράγεσθαι, ἥρωας δὲ κατὰ τοὺς τῆς ζωῆς ἐν τοῖς θείοις **5**  
λόγους, καὶ τὰ πρῶτα καὶ τέλεια μέτρα τῶν ψυχῶν ἀποτελεωτῶν ἀπ' αὐ-  
τῶν καὶ ἀπομερίζεσθαι.

Γενομένους δ' οὕτως ἀπὸ τῶν ἐτέρων αἰτίων καὶ αὐτὴν ἔχειν τὴν  
οὐσίαν παραλλάττουσαν· ἀπεργαστικὴν μὲν εἶναι τὴν τῶν δαιμόνων καὶ  
τελεσιουργὸν τῶν περικοσμίων φύσεων καὶ ἀποπληρωτικὴν τῆς καθ' ἑκα- **10**  
στον τῶν γιγνομένων ἐπιστασίας, ζωτικὴν (δὲ) καὶ λογικὴν καὶ ψυχῶν  
ἡγεμονικὴν ὑπάρχειν τὴν τῶν ἡρώων. Δυνάμεις τε τοῖς μὲν δαίμοσι γο-  
νίμους, ἐπιστατικάς τε τῆς φύσεως καὶ τοῦ συνδέσμου τῶν ψυχῶν εἰς τὰ  
[68] σώματα ἀφοριστέον· τοῖς δ' ἥρωσι | ζωοποιούς, ἡγεμονικάς τῶν ἀνθρώ- **1**  
πων, γενέσεως ἀπολελυμένας ἀπονέμειν ἄξιον.

**2** Ἐπομένως δὲ καὶ τὰς ἐνεργείας αὐτῶν διοριστέον· καὶ μᾶλλον  
μὲν περικοσμίους θετέον τὰς τῶν δαιμόνων, καὶ διατεινούσας ἐπὶ πλεῖον  
ἐν τοῖς ἀποτελουμένοις ὑφ' ἑαυτῶν, τὰς δὲ τῶν ἡρώων καὶ ἐπ' ἔλαττον **5**  
μὲν διηκούσας, παρὰ δὲ τὴν τῶν ψυχῶν διάταξιν ἐπιστρεφομένας.

Οὕτω δὴ οὖν διωρισμένων δευτέρα καταλήγουσα πρὸς τὸ τέλος τῶν  
θειῶν τάξεων καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν δύο τούτων γενῶν μοίρας τινὰς δυνάμειν  
διακληρωσαμένη μεριστάς, προσθήκαις τε ἄλλαις περιττοτέραις πλεονά-  
ζουσα ἂν ἑαυτῆς, καὶ ἄλλοτε ἄλλα εἶδη καὶ λόγους ἐξ ἐτέρων ἐτέρους **10**  
βίους τε ἄλλους ἄλλοτε προβάλλουσα, καθ' ἑκάστην τε χώραν τοῦ κόσμου

[67].4 πορρωτάτω VM: πορρωτάτῃ (ἡ ex ω) M<sup>2</sup> || **8** γενομένους cj. Saffrey: γενομένης VM γενομένην cj. Gale | οὕτως VM: add. φύσεως δαιμόνων καὶ ἡρώων i. m. V<sup>2</sup> || **9** παραλλάττουσαν VM: add. cj. ἀνάγκη Gale || **11** ζωτικὴν δὲ scripsi: ζωτικὴν VM || [68].1 ζωοποιούς V: ζωοποιὸς M || **6** παρὰ VM: περὶ cj. Gale || **7** δευτέρα VM: ὑστέρα cj. Parthey || **8** (ante καὶ) ἐστὶν ἡ ψυχὴ add. i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: om. VM || **10** λόγους M: λόγους τε V || **11** προβάλλουσα (pr. σ p. n.) V<sup>2</sup>: προσβάλλουσα VM

## BOOK II

1 I must also make this clear to you, in what way a daemon differs in its true nature from both a hero and a soul, either in its potency or in its activity. By “daemons” I mean the generative and creative powers of the gods in the furthest extremity of their emanations and in its last stages of division,<sup>114</sup> while heroes are produced according to principles of life among the gods; and that the foremost and perfect due measures of souls result from and are distinguished from these powers.

Since daemons and heroes have thus come into being from different sources, their true nature also differs. That of daemons is fit for finishing and completing encosmic natures, and it exercises oversight on each thing coming into existence; that of heroes is full of life and reason, and has leadership over souls. One must assign to daemons productive powers that oversee nature and the bond uniting souls to bodies; but to heroes it is right to assign life-giving powers, directive of human beings, and yet exempt from becoming.

2 Next, one must also define their activities, and posit that those of daemons extend further into the cosmos, and have greater sway over the things accomplished by them; but the activities of heroes have a more restricted field, and are concerned with the organisation of souls.

While the other classes of being are differentiated in this way, secondary to these is the soul, which stops at the boundary of divine orders and which has been allotted partial powers from these two classes,<sup>115</sup> while expanding with more abundant supplements from itself; and at one point or another it projects forms and principles different from one another, and different forms of

<sup>114</sup> Emanation or procession (*πρόοδος*) involves a lessening of power and a multiplication of entities, so that the lower levels of being are more numerous than the higher.

<sup>115</sup> Namely, daemons and heroes.

[69] ποικίλαις ζωαῖς καὶ ιδέαις χρωμένη, | συμφυρομένη τε οἷς ἂν ἐθέλῃ, καὶ 1  
 ἀφ' ὧν ἂν βούληται ἀναχωροῦσα, ὁμοιουμένη τοῖς πᾶσι καὶ δι' ἑτερότητος  
 ἀπ' αὐτῶν διῤυσταμένη, λόγους τε προχειρίζουσα συγγενεῖς τοῖς οὖσι καὶ  
 γιγνομένοις, θεοῖς τε συνάπτουσα ἑαυτὴν κατ' ἄλλας ἁρμονίας οὖσιων καὶ  
 δυνάμεων ἢ καθ' οἷας δαίμονές τε καὶ ἥρωες πρὸς αὐτοὺς συνεπλέκοντο· 5  
 καὶ τὸ μὲν αἰδίων τῆς ὁμοίας ζωῆς καὶ ἐνεργείας παρ' ἑλαττον ἐκείνων  
 ἔχουσα, διὰ δὲ τὴν τῶν θεῶν βούλησιν ἀγαθὴν καὶ τὴν ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἐν-  
 διδομένην φωτὸς ἔλλαμψιν πολλάκις καὶ ἀνωτέρω χωροῦσα, ἐπὶ μείζονά  
 τε τάξιν τὴν ἀγγελικὴν ἀναγομένη. Ὅτε δὴ οὐκέτι τοῖς τῆς ψυχῆς ὅροις  
 ἀναμένει, τὸ δ' ὅλον τοῦτο εἰς ἀγγελικὴν ψυχὴν καὶ ἄχραντον τελειοῦ- 10  
 ται ζωὴν. Ὅθεν δὴ καὶ δοκεῖ παντοδαπὰς οὐσίας καὶ ἐνεργείας λόγους τε  
 παντοίους καὶ εἶδη τὰ ὅλα παρέχειν ἐν ἑαυτῇ ἢ ψυχῇ. Τὸ δ' εἰ χρὴ τάληθές  
 εἰπεῖν, ὥριστα μὲν ἀεὶ καθ' ἑν τι, κοινοῦσα δ' ἑαυτὴν τοῖς προηγούμενοις  
 αἰτίοις ἄλλοτε ἄλλοις συντάττεται.

[70] | Τοσαύτης οὖν οὔσης καθόλου διαφορᾶς ἐν αὐτοῖς, οὐκέτι δεῖ ἀμφισ- 1  
 βητεῖν τί δήποτε ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐστὶ τὸ παραλλάττον· ἥπερ δὴ ἔχει φύσεως  
 ταῦτα ἕκαστα, ταύτῃ διακριτέον ταῦτα ἀπ' ἀλλήλων· καὶ καθ' ὅσον δύνα-  
 ται σύνοδον ποιεῖσθαι μίαν, κατὰ τοσοῦτον τὴν κοινωνίαν αὐτῶν θεωρη-  
 τέον· οὕτω γὰρ ἂν τις αὐτῶν δυνηθείη ἀψευδῶς περιλαβεῖν καὶ διορίσαι 5  
 χωρὶς τὴν ἔννοιαν.

[69].1 τε V: τε ἄμα M τε ᾧ (μα p. n.) M<sup>2</sup> || 7 ἔχουσα (ι eraso) V<sup>2</sup>:  
 ἔχουσαι VM || 8 χωροῦσα (ι eraso) V<sup>2</sup>: χωροῦσαι VM || 11 ἐνεργείας i. m.  
 V<sup>2</sup>: οὐσίας VM || 13 κοινοῦσα VM: κοινωνοῦσα cj. Gale || 14 συντάττεται  
 VM: συνάπτεται cj. B || [70].1 καθόλου cj. Velsenius: καθ' ὅλα VM || 2 δὴ  
 V: δὲ M || 3-4 δύναται] δυνατὸν cj. Boulliau i. m. U

life, while making use of the diverse lives and forms of each cosmic region.<sup>116</sup> It joins with whatever it will, and withdraws from whatever it will, becoming like all things and, by difference, remaining separate from them. It selects principles akin both to things really existent and to those coming into being,<sup>117</sup> allying itself to the gods by harmonies of essences and of potentialities different from those by which daemons and heroes are linked to them. And though the soul has to a lesser degree the eternity of unchanging life and full actuality, by means of the gods' good will and the illumination bestowed by their light, it often goes higher and is elevated to a greater rank, even to that of the angelic order.<sup>118</sup> When it no longer abides in the confines of the soul, this totality is perfected in an angelic soul and an immaculate life. Hence, the soul seems to have in itself all kinds of being and activities, all kinds of principles, and forms in their entirety. Indeed, to tell the truth, while the soul is always limited to a single, definite body, it is, in associating itself with the superior guiding principles, variously allied to different ones.

Since there is such a general distinction among these kinds, it is no longer necessary to dispute over whatever may distinguish them: in whatever way each has its own nature, in this way they are distinguished from one another, and to the extent that one can compose them into a single system, they can be viewed as associated. For thus would one both be able to comprehend them accurately as a system, and to distinguish separately the concept of each.

<sup>116</sup> That is to say, souls have the characteristic, not shared by the classes of being above them, of involving themselves with a succession of different bodies and their "lives."

<sup>117</sup> "Abamon" implies a contrast between *δντα* and *γιγνόμενα* here, emphasising the essentially median and intermediary role of the soul's position in the cosmos according to Iamblichean metaphysics.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. II.6.83 and also I.12.41–42 for this miracle of elevation to the angelic order, mentioned here for the first time. Angels as a distinct category of being were not recognised by Plotinus, but certainly were by Porphyry, as evidenced by Augustine, *Civ.* 10.9.20–35 (= 290F Smith) and 26.1–11 (= 285F Smith).



**3** Ἄλλ' ἐπὶ τὰς ἐπιφανείας αὐτῶν βαδιοῦμαι. Τί δήποτε ἔχουσι τὸ διάφορον; ἐπιζητεῖς γὰρ τί τὸ γνώρισμα θεοῦ παρουσίας ἢ ἀγγέλου ἢ ἀρχαγγέλου ἢ δαίμονος ἢ τινος ἄρχοντος ἢ ψυχῆς. Ἐνὶ μὲν οὖν λόγῳ ταῖς οὐσίαις αὐτῶν καὶ δυνάμεσι καὶ ἐνεργείαις τὰς ἐπιφανείας ἀφορίζομαι 10 εἶναι ὁμολογουμένας· οἳοι γὰρ ποτέ εἰσι, τοιοῦτοι καὶ τοῖς ἐπικαλουμένοις ἐπιφαίνονται, ἐνεργείας τε ἀναφαίνουσι, καὶ ιδέας ἑαυτοῖς συμφώνους καὶ γνωρίζματα ἑαυτῶν τὰ οἰκεῖα ἐπιδεικνύουσιν.

[71] Ὡς δὲ καθ' ἕκαστον διορίσασθαι, μονοειδῆ μὲν ἔστι φάσματα τὰ τῶν θεῶν, τὰ δὲ τῶν δαιμόνων ποικίλα, τὰ | δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων ἀπλού- 1 στερα μὲν ἢ κατὰ τοὺς δαίμονας, τῶν δὲ θείων ὑποδεέστερα, τὰ δὲ τῶν ἀρχαγγέλων μᾶλλον τι τοῖς θεοῖς αἰτίοις συνεγγίζοντα, τὰ δὲ τῶν ἀρχόντων, εἰ μὲν σοι δοκοῦσιν οὗτοι εἶναι οἱ κοσμοκράτορες οἱ τὰ ὑπὸ σελήνην στοιχεῖα διοικοῦντες, ἔσται ποικίλα μὲν, ἐν τάξει δὲ διακεκοσμημένα, εἰ 5 δ' οἱ τῆς ὕλης προεστηκότες, ἔσται ποικιλώτερα μὲν, ἀτελέστερα δὲ τούτων μᾶλλον· τὰ δὲ τῶν ψυχῶν παντοδαπὰ φαίνεται. Καὶ τὰ μὲν τῶν θεῶν χρηστὰ τῇ ὄψει ἐλλάμπει, τὰ δὲ τῶν ἀρχαγγέλων βλοσυρὰ ἅμα καὶ ἡμερα, πρᾶότερα δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων, τὰ δὲ τῶν δαιμόνων φοβερά· τὰ δὲ τῶν ἡρώων,

[70].14 μονοειδῆ || 15 θεῶν VM: τὰ μὲν τῶν θεῶν φαντάσματα μονοειδῆ εἰσι h || [71].5 ποικίλα h: ποικιλία VM | διακεκοσμημένα h: διακεκοσμημένως VM || 7 παντοδαπὰ scr. BU: παντοδαπᾶ VM

3 But I now proceed to their manifestations.<sup>119</sup> In what way do they differ? For, you ask, “what is the sign of the presence of a god, an angel, an archangel, a daemon, or of some archon or a soul?”<sup>120</sup> So, then, in brief, I declare that their manifestations are in accordance with their true natures, their potentialities and activities.<sup>121</sup> For as they are, so they appear to those invoking them; they display their activities and manifest forms in agreement with themselves and their own characteristic signs.

But to distinguish them individually: the appearances of the gods are uniform; those of daemons are varied; those of angels are simpler than those of daemons, but inferior to those of the gods. Those of archangels are closer to divine principles, but those of archons, if you take these to be rulers of the cosmos,<sup>122</sup> who administer the sublunary elements, are varied, but structured in an orderly manner; and, if they preside over matter, they are more varied and more imperfect than archangels; and the appearances of souls come in all sorts of forms. And again, those of gods shine benignly in appearance; while those of archangels are solemn, though at the same time gentle,<sup>123</sup> milder than those of

<sup>119</sup> For discussion of this account of the “manifestations” (ἐπιφάνειαι) see Cremer (1969); Finamore (1993); Clarke (2001, 100–18). Note the striking parallel of a descending scale of fiery images in the Hermetic *Poimandres*, *Corp. herm.* 1.4–5.

<sup>120</sup> Thus far “Abamon” has only mentioned the traditional distinctions between gods, daemons, heroes and souls, but here he inserts three classes of intermediate beings, archangels, angels and archons.

<sup>121</sup> Following the Iamblichean principle that ἐνέργεια reveals οὐσία, the visible manifestation of a divine entity must correspond with its essence. See Shaw (1995, 219–20); Steel (1978, 54–59, 94–98). Cf. also above *Myst.* I.4 and note ad loc.

<sup>122</sup> On the κοσμοκράτορες (or ἡγεμονικοί) see later in IX.9.284.3–7, and Damascius, *Comm. Parm.* 131.9.15ff., who uses the term to describe the planetary gods, but “Abamon” seems to imply a broader category of being here. At any rate, he is making a clear distinction between sublunary and hylic archons. For discussion see Dillon (1973, 51); Cremer (1969, 86–91); Clarke (2001, 110–11).

<sup>123</sup> Athanassiadi (1999, 195) sees an interesting parallel at Damascius, *Hist. phil.* frg. 75F.3–5 where a vision is described “which gloried in a grace that was not sweet but severe; a face that was nevertheless very beautiful to behold and which for all its severity displayed no less gentleness” (οὐ γλυκείαις χάρισιν ἀλλὰ βλοσυραῖς ἀγαλλόμενον, κάλλιστον δὲ ὅμως ἰδεῖν καὶ οὐδὲν ἤττον ἐπὶ τῷ βλοσυρῷ τὸ ἥπιον ἐπιδεικνύμενον).

καὶ εἰ παραλέλειπται ἐν τῇ ἐρωτήσῃ, τυγχανέτω τῆς ἀληθείας γε ἕνεκα 10  
ἀποκρίσεως, ὅτι δὴ τῶν δαιμονίων ἐστὶν ἡμερώτερα· τὰ δὲ τῶν ἀρχόντων  
καταπληκτικὰ μὲν ἐστίν, εἰ περὶ τὸν κόσμον ἐνεξουσιάζουσιν, βλαβερὰ δὲ  
τοῖς ὁρώσι καὶ λυπηρά, εἴπερ εἰσὶν ἔνυλοι· τὰ δὲ τῶν ψυχῶν προσέοικε  
μὲν τι τοῖς ἡρωϊκοῖς, πλήν ἐστὶ γε αὐτῶν ὑποδεέστερα.

[72]

Πάλιν τοίνυν τὰ μὲν τῶν θεῶν ἐστὶ παντελῶς ἀμετάβλητα κατὰ τε 1  
μέγεθος καὶ μορφὴν καὶ σχῆμα καὶ κατὰ πάντα τὰ περὶ αὐτοὺς ὄντα· τὰ  
δὲ τῶν ἀρχαγγέλων, πλησιάζοντα τοῖς τῶν θεῶν, ἀπολείπεται αὐτῶν τῆς  
ταυτότητος· τὰ δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων καὶ τούτων ἐστὶν ὑποδεέστερα, ἀμετά-  
βλητα δέ· τὰ τῶν δαιμόνων ἰνδάλλεται ἄλλοτε ἐπ' ἄλλης ὁρώμενα μορφῆς, 5  
καὶ μεγάλα καὶ μικρὰ τὰ αὐτὰ φαινόμενα. Καὶ δὴ καὶ τὰ τῶν ἀρχόντων,  
ὅσα μὲν ἐστὶν ἡγεμονικά, ἀναλλοίωτα ὑπάρχει, τὰ δ' ἔνυλα ἀλλοιοῦται  
πολυνειδῶς· τὰ δὲ τῶν ἡρώων προσέοικε τοῖς τῶν δαιμόνων, τὰ δ' αὖ τῶν  
ψυχῶν τῆς δαιμονίας μεταβολῆς οὐκ ὀλίγον μέρος ὑφίησιν.

Ἔτι τοίνυν τάξις καὶ ἡρεμία τοῖς θεοῖς προσήκει, τοῖς δὲ τῶν ἀρ- 10  
χαγγέλων δραστήριον τὸ τῆς τάξεως καὶ ἡρεμίας ὑπάρχει, τοῖς δὲ ἀγγέ-  
λοις οὐκ ἀπηλλαγμένον ἤδη κινήσεως τὸ διακεκοσμημένον καὶ ἡσυχαῖον  
πάρεστι, ταραχὴ δὲ καὶ ἀταξία τοῖς δαιμονίοις φάσμασι συνακολουθεῖ,  
τοῖς δὲ τῶν ἀρχόντων κατὰ δόξαν ἐκατέρωθεν ὧν προεῖπομεν ὁμολογούμενα  
[73] συνέπεται τὰ ὁράματα, θορυβώδη | μὲν φερόμενα τὰ ἔνυλα, τὰ δ' ἡγεμο- 1  
νικὰ μονίμως ἐστῶτα ἐν αὐτοῖς, τὰ δὲ τῶν ἡρώων ἡπειγμένα τῇ κινήσει  
καὶ μεταβολῇ οὐκ ἄμοιρα, τὰ δὲ τῶν ψυχῶν προσεικοτά μὲν τι τοῖς  
ἡρωϊκοῖς, ἐλάττονα δ' ὅμως ὄντα καὶ τούτων.

Πρὸς δὴ τούτοις τοῖς ιδιώμασι τὰ μὲν θεῖα κάλλος οἷον ἀμήχανον 5  
ἀπαστρέπτει, θαύματι μὲν κατέχον τοὺς ὁρῶντας, θεσπεσίαν δ' εὐφροσύ-  
νην παρεχόμενον, ἀρρήτω δὲ τῇ συμμετρῷ ἀναφανόμενον, ἐξηρημένον δ'  
ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων εἰδῶν τῆς εὐπρεπείας. Τὰ δὲ τῶν ἀρχαγγέλων μακάρια  
θεάματα μέγιστον μὲν ἔχει καὶ αὐτὰ τὸ κάλλος, οὐ μὴν ἔτι γ' ὁμοίως ἀρ-  
ρητον καὶ θαυμαστὸν ὥσπερ τὸ θεῖον· τὰ δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων μεριστῶς ἤδη 10  
διαριεῖ τὸ καλὸν ὅπερ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀρχαγγέλων παραδέχεται. Τὰ δαιμόνια δὲ

[71].10 καὶ εἰ ] εἰ καὶ h || 12 εἰ VM: οἱ s. v. V<sup>2</sup> || 14 μὲν τι Vh:  
μέντοι M || [72].6 τὰ' h: κατὰ VM || 9 ὑφίησιν h: ὑφιῖσιν VM || 12  
ἤδη κινήσεως Vh: κινήσεως ἤδη M || 14 προεῖπομεν VM: προειρήκαμεν h  
|| [73].2 ἡπειγμένα VM: ὑπειγμένα cj. Gale || 3 μὲν τι scripsi (cf. 71, 26):  
μέντοι VM

angels; and those of daemons are frightening. And as for those of heroes, even if they have been omitted in your inquiry, let there be an answer for truth's sake, because they are indeed gentler than the daemoniac; those of archons are striking if they are in authority over the cosmos, and actually harmful and painful to the viewers if they are involved with matter. The appearances of souls are rather like the heroic, except that they are inferior to them.

Once again, these appearances of the gods are wholly unchanging in regard to size, shape, formation, and all things connected with them; while those of archangels, though very close to those of the gods, fall short of full identity with them. And those of angels are inferior in turn to these, but unchanging. And those of daemons appear to the view at different times in different forms, the same forms appearing great and small. And further, those of such archons as are administrative are unchanging, but the appearances of archons immersed in matter change into many forms. Those of heroes resemble daemons, and those of souls are inferior in no small degree to the changeability of daemons.

Further still, order and tranquillity are characteristic of the gods, while in the case of archangels the order and tranquillity take on an active quality. But with the angels, orderly arrangement and calmness are no longer exempt from motion. Tumult and disorder, however, accompany the visions of daemons, while those of archons are in keeping with the two views of them which we have already mentioned: tumultuous when borne along immersed in matter, but when ruling, they abide steadfastly in themselves. Those of heroes are impelled on in motion, and are not exempt from change. Those of souls, lastly, resemble somewhat the appearances of heroes, but are nevertheless inferior even to them.

Besides these characteristics, divine appearances flash forth a beauty almost irresistible, seizing those beholding it with wonder, providing a wondrous cheerfulness, manifesting itself with ineffable symmetry, and transcending in comeliness all other forms. The blessed visions of archangels also have themselves an extremity of beauty, but it is not at all as unspeakable and wonderful as that of the gods' divine beauty, and those of angels already exhibit in a partial and divided manner the beauty that is

καὶ τὰ ἡρωϊκὰ αὐτοπτικὰ πνεύματα ἐν εἵδεσι μὲν ὠρισμένοις ἔχει τὸ κάλ-  
λος ἀμφοτέρω, οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν ἐν λόγοις τοῖς τὴν οὐσίαν ἀφορίζουσι  
διακοσμηθέν ἐστι δαιμόνιον, τὸ δ' ἐπιδεικνύμενον τὴν ἀνδρίαν ἡρωϊκόν.

[74] Τὰ δὲ τῶν ἀρχόντων διχῇ διηρησθῶ· τὰ μὲν γὰρ ἡγεμονικὸν | κάλλος 1  
καὶ αὐτοφνὲς ἐπιδείκνυσιν, τὰ δ' εὐμορφίαν πεπλασμένην καὶ ἐπισκευα-  
στὴν ἐμφαίνει. Τὰ δὲ τῶν ψυχῶν ἐν λόγοις μὲν καὶ αὐτὰ διακεκόσμηται  
πεπερασμένοις, διηρημένοις δὲ μᾶλλον τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἥρωσι καὶ περιειλημ- 5  
μένοις μεριστῶς καὶ κρατουμένοις ὑφ' ἑνὸς εἵδους. Εἰ δὲ δεῖ κατὰ πάντων 5  
κοινῶς ἀφορίσασθαι, φημὶ τῶν ὅλων ὥσπερ ἕκαστα διατέτακται καὶ ὡς  
ἔχει τῆς οἰκείας φύσεως, οὕτω καὶ τοῦ κάλλους αὐτὰ κατὰ τὴν ὑπάρχου-  
σαν διακλήρωσιν μετεिलηγέται.

4 Ἐπ' ἄλλα τοίνυν ιδιώματα αὐτῶν μετιόντες λέγωμεν ὡς ὁξύτης  
ἐν ταῖς ἐνεργείαις παρὰ μὲν τοῖς θεοῖς καὶ αὐτοῦ τοῦ νοῦ ταχύτερα δια- 10  
λάμπει, καίτοι ἀκίνητοί τε ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ σταθεραὶ εἰσιν αὐταί· παρὰ δὲ  
τοῖς ἀρχαγγέλοις σύμμικτοί πῶς εἰσιν αἱ ταχυτῆτες αὐτῶν δραστηρίοις  
ἐνεργείαις· αἱ δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων ἐφάπτονται τινος ἤδη κινήσεως, καὶ τὸ  
ἅμα τῷ λέγειν ἀποτελεστικὸν οὐκέτι ὁμοίως προσειλήφασιν· παρὰ δὲ τοῖς 1  
[75] δαίμοσι φαντασία | πλείων ἐστὶ τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ τάχους τῶν ἔργων. Ἐν 1  
δὲ τοῖς ἡρωϊκοῖς μεγαλοπρέπεια μὲν τις ἐν ταῖς κινήσεσι διαφαίνεται, τὸ  
δ' ἀποτελεστικὸν ὧν ἐφίενται ἐνεργεῖν οὐχ οὕτω ταχέως ὥσπερ τοῖς δαί-  
μοσι πάρεστιν. Ἐν δὲ τοῖς τῶν ἀρχόντων ἀξιόλογα μὲν τὰ πρῶτα καὶ  
ἐξουσιαστικὰ ἐνεργήματα καταφαίνεται, τὰ δευτέρω δὲ ἔμφασιν μὲν ἔχει 5  
πλείονα, τοῦ δ' ἐπὶ τῶν πράξεων τέλους ἀπολείπεται· τὰ δ' ἐπὶ τῶν ψυχῶν  
κεκινήμενα μᾶλλον, ἀσθενέστερα δὲ τῶν ἡρωϊκῶν ὁράται.

Πρὸς δὲ τούτοις τὸ μέγεθος τῶν ἐπιφανειῶν παρὰ μὲν τοῖς θεοῖς  
τοσοῦτον ἐπιδείκνυται ὡς καὶ τὸν οὐρανὸν ὅλον ἐνίστε ἀποκρύπτειν καὶ  
τὸν ἥλιον καὶ τὴν σελήνην, τὴν τε γῆν μηκέτι δύνασθαι ἐστάναι αὐτῶν 10  
κατιόντων· ἀρχαγγέλων δ' ἐκφαινομένων μοῖραι μὲν τινες συγκινοῦνται

[74].1 κάλλος M et (x s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: ἄλλος V || 2 ἐπιδείκνυσιν VMh: ἐπι-  
δείκνυται h<sup>2</sup> || 2-3 καὶ ἐπισκευαστὴν h: ἐπισκευαστὴν VM ἐπισκευαστικὴν cj.  
BU || 5 μεριστῶς M et (alt. σ e v) V<sup>2</sup>: μεριστῶν V || 9 ὁξύτης M: ὁξύτης  
V || 10 παρὰ (α et ἄ s. v.) h<sup>2</sup> (cj. Gale): περὶ VMh || 11 τε h: γε VM |  
παρὰ VM: περὶ h || 14 παρὰ (α et ἄ s. v.) h<sup>2</sup> (cj. Gale): περὶ VMh || [75].8  
παρὰ cj. Gale: περὶ VMh

received from the archangels. The pneumatic spirits<sup>124</sup> of daemons and heroes appearing in direct visions both possess beauty in distinct forms; however, that which is arranged in proportions determining essence is daemonic, and that which displays courage is heroic. The special appearances of the archons may be divided in two ways: the one class displays a dominant and self-originated beauty, while the other manifests a beauty of form that is artificial and contrived. Those of souls are also arranged in limited proportions, but more divided than those of the heroes, individually encompassed and dominated by one form. If we are to give them a common denominator, I declare the following: in the same way that each of the beings of the universe is disposed, and has its own proper nature, so also it participates in beauty according to the allotment granted to it.

4 Then, passing on to their other characteristic features, let us say that there shines forth among the gods a swiftness in their activities, more rapid than the intellect itself, although these activities in the gods are motionless and stable. Among the archangels, their swift movements are somehow mixed with their efficacious activities. Those of the angels, in turn, are involved with some motion, and no longer share in the same way in being completed as soon as spoken of. In the case of the daemons the appearance of the swiftness of their accomplishments is more than the reality. And among the heroes, a certain magnificence is evident in their movements, but the efficaciousness of what they aim to perform is not as swift as that among the daemons. Among the characteristic features of the archons, the activities of the first group appear remarkable and powerful, while those of the second make a greater impression but fall short of fulfilment in their acts. As for those of souls, they are seen to be more mobile, but weaker than those of heroes.

In addition, the magnitude of the epiphanies in the case of the gods manifests itself to the extent that they sometimes hide the entire heaven, both sun and moon, and the earth is no longer able to stand firm as they make their descent.<sup>125</sup> When archangels

<sup>124</sup> A reference to the pneumatic soul-vehicle. See Dodds (1963; 313-18); Finamore (1985).

<sup>125</sup> Cf. *PGM* IV. 930-1114. Note also *PGM* IV. 970, 979-980 on conjuring a holy light with reference to its brightness, breadth, depth, length and height.

τοῦ κόσμου καὶ πρόδρομον φῶς προηγείται διηρημένον, αὐτοὶ δὲ κατὰ με-  
 γέθη τῆς ἡγεμονίας σύμμετρον ἐπιδεικνύουσι καὶ τὸ τῆς αὐγῆς μέγεθος.  
 Τούτου δ' ἑλαττόν ἐστι τὸ ἀγγελικὸν μικρότητί τε καὶ τῷ κατ' ἀριθ-  
 [76] μὸν διη|ρηθῆναι, ἐπὶ δ' αὖ τῶν δαιμόνων διηρημένον τε ἔτι μᾶλλον καὶ 1  
 οὐκ ἴσον ἀεὶ αὐτῶν θεωρεῖται τὸ μέγεθος. Τὸ δ' ἡρωϊκὸν τούτου φαινό-  
 μενον ἑλαττον μεγαλοφροσύνην τῆς καταστάσεως ἐμφαίνει πλείονα. Τῶν  
 δ' ἀρχόντων ὅσα μὲν εἶδη περικόσμια προηγείται, μεγάλα καὶ ὑπέρογκα  
 φαίνεται, τὰ δὲ περὶ τὴν ὕλην μεριζόμενα τύφῳ καὶ ἀλαζονείᾳ πλείονι 5  
 χρήται. Τὰ δὲ τῶν ψυχῶν οὐκ ἴσα μὲν ὁρᾶται πάντα, σμικρότερα δ' ἢ τὰ  
 τῶν ἡρώων διαφαίνεται. Ὅλως δὲ κατὰ τὰ μεγέθη τῶν ἐν ἐκάστοις τοῖς  
 γένεσι δυνάμεων καὶ κατὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῆς ἀρχῆς δι' ἧς διατείνουσι καὶ  
 ἡ ἐνεξουσιάζουσιν, ἀνὰ τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον καὶ τὰ μεγέθη τῶν ἐπιφανειῶν  
 οἰκείως ἐν ἐκάστοις πάρεστιν. 10

Μετὰ δὴ τούτων καὶ τὴν ἐνάργειαν τῶν αὐτοφανῶν ἀγαλμάτων  
 ἀφορισώμεθα. Οὐκοῦν ἐν μὲν ταῖς τῶν θεῶν αὐτοψίαις ἐναργέστερα καὶ  
 [77] αὐτῆς τῆς ἀληθείας ὁρᾶται τὰ θεάματα, | ἀκριβῶς τε διαλάμπει καὶ διηρ- 1  
 θρωμένα λαμπρῶς ἐκφαίνεται· τὰ δὲ τῶν ἀρχαγγέλων ἀληθινὰ καὶ τέλεια  
 θεωρεῖται· τὰ δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων διασώζει μὲν τὸ αὐτὸ εἶδος, πλὴν ὑφίη-  
 σί τι τῆς γνωριστικῆς ἀποπληρώσεως. Ἀμυδρὰ δὲ τὰ τῶν δαιμόνων καὶ  
 τούτων ὑποδέστερα τὰ τῶν ἡρώων φαίνεται. Τὰ δὲ τῶν ἀρχόντων τὰ μὲν 5  
 κοσμικὰ ἐναργῆ, τὰ δ' ὕλικά ἀμυδρά, ἐξουσιαστικά δ' ἀμφοτέρω ὁρᾶται·  
 τὰ δὲ τῶν ψυχῶν σκιοειδῆ καταφαίνεται.

[75].12-13 μεγέθη suspectum: an πλήθη? || 13 αὐγῆς V<sup>2</sup>: αὐτῆς VM ||  
 14 τούτου Vh: τοῦτο M | τῷ h et (ω s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: τὸ VM || [76].7 διαφαίνεται  
 Vh: διαφαίνονται M | κατὰ h et (ῆ p. n.) V<sup>c</sup>: ἡ κατὰ VM καὶ κατὰ cj. Sicherl  
 || 9 ἐνεξουσιάζουσιν V: ἀναξουσιάζουσιν M || 11 καὶ τὴν h: τὸ s. v. V<sup>2</sup> om.  
 VM | ἐνάργειαν cj. Saffrey: ἐνέργειαν h om. VM || 12 ἐναργέστερα Mh et  
 (ἐνα s. v.) V<sup>c</sup>: ἀνεργέστερα V || [77].4 τι Vh: τε M

appear, certain portions of the world are set in motion in concert with them, and a divided<sup>126</sup> light goes before them in advance, while they themselves, in proportion to the magnitude of their dominion, also display the magnitude of their illumination. Lesser than this is the light shed by angels, in respect of smallness, and of numerical division; and in the case of the daemons this division is even greater, and its size is observed to be not always equal. That of the heroes appears less than the preceding, but exhibits a greatness of spirit greater than its condition. Among the archons, those that preside in the cosmos appear large and excessive in bulk, but those that are divided about matter are characterised rather by affectation and a greater degree of boastfulness.<sup>127</sup> Those of the souls do not appear all equal, and show themselves as smaller than those of heroes. And, in general, it is in accord with the magnitude of the powers in each kind, and according to the extent of the power through which they extend and exercise their authority, that the magnitude of their particular appearances is properly present in each of them.

After these considerations, let us also define the degrees of vividness of self-revelatory images.<sup>128</sup> So then, in the case of the supernatural manifestations of the gods, their visions are seen more clearly than the truth itself, and they shine forth sharply and are revealed in brilliant differentiation. The images of the archangels are seen as true and perfect, whereas those of angels preserve the same form except that they are somewhat inferior in cognitive perfection. Obscure are the images of daemons, and inferior in turn to these appear those of heroes. Of the archons, the images of the cosmic class are clear, but those of the material class are obscure, even though both are seen as a powerful authority. The images of souls in turn appear shadowy.

<sup>126</sup> It is not exactly clear what "Abamon" means by διηρημένον here. It may simply reinforce his point that the forerunning light is separate from the true light of the archangels, or it may emphasise the fact that the light of all entities is splintered in comparison with that of the gods.

<sup>127</sup> The archons have already been divided into cosmic and material at II.3.71; see note ad loc.

<sup>128</sup> For αὐτοφάνης cf. Proclus, *Comm. Resp.* 2.107.29; 124.19; 246.7; *Theol. plat.* 4.77.6 and Syrianus *Comm. Met.* 187.9, and for αὐτοπτος see *Orac. chald.* frg. 101; 142. Also PGM IV. 162; IV. 930; VIII. 85; III. 699; III. 291.



Ὡσαύτως τοίνυν καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ φωτός. Τὰ μὲν τῶν θεῶν ἀγάλματα  
φωτὸς πλέον ἀστράπτει· φωτὸς δ' ὑπερφυοῦς ἐστὶ πλήρη τὰ τῶν ἀρχαγγέ-  
λων, φωτεινὰ δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων. Δαίμονες δὲ θολῶδες διαφαίνουσι τὸ πῦρ, 10  
ἥρωες δὲ σύμμικτον ἀπὸ πλειόνων, ἄρχοντες δ' οἱ μὲν κοσμικοὶ καὶ καθ-  
αρώτερον, οἱ δὲ τῆς ὕλης ἐξ ἀνομοίων καὶ ἐναντίων αὐτὸ συμμιγνύμενον  
ἐπιδεικνύουσιν· αἱ ψυχαὶ δ' ἀπὸ πολλῶν τῶν ἐν τῇ γενέσει συγκράσεων  
ἀναπεπλησμένον αὐτὸ μεριστῶς ἔκδηλον ἀπεργάζονται.

[78] Κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ δὲ τοῖς εἰρημένοις τὸ μὲν τῶν θεῶν | πῦρ ἄτομον 1  
ἄφθεγκτον ἐκλάμπει, καὶ πληροὶ τὰ ὅλα βάθῃ τοῦ κόσμου πυρίως ἄλλ' οὐ  
περικοσμίως. Τὸ δὲ τῶν ἀρχαγγέλων ἀμέριστον μὲν, ἔχον δὲ περὶ ἑαυτὸ  
ἢ πρὸ ἑαυτοῦ προπομπεῖον ἢ μεθ' ἑαυτὸ συνεπόμενον πολὺ πλῆθος θεω-  
ρεῖται. Τὸ δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων διηρημένον πῦρ πλὴν ἐν ταῖς γε τελειοτάταις 5  
ιδέαις διαφαίνεται. Τὸ δὲ τῶν δαιμόνων μερισμοῦ τε ἔτι ἐπὶ βραχύτερον  
περιγράφεται, καὶ λόγῳ ῥητὸν ὑπάρχει, καὶ τῆς ὄψεως τῶν τὰ κρεῖττονα  
ὁρῶντων οὐχ ὑπερέχει. Τὸ δὲ τῶν ἡρώων ἔχει μὲν τὰ αὐτὰ τρόπον γέ-  
τινα, ἀπολείπεται δ' ὅμως αὐτῶν τῆς ἄκρας ὁμοιώσεως. Καὶ μὴν τό γε  
τῶν ἀρχόντων ὅσον μὲν ὑψηλότερον αὐτοῦ διαφανέστερον θεωρεῖται, τὸ δ' 10  
ἔνυλον σκοτωδέστερον· τὸ δ' αὖ τῶν ψυχῶν πολυμερὲς μὲν καὶ πολυειδὲς  
ἐπιδείκνυται, σύμμικτον δ' ἀπὸ πολλῶν τῶν περὶ τὸν κόσμον φύσεων. Καὶ  
[79] μὴν τό γε τῶν θεῶν πάντῃ σταθερόν ἐστιν ἰδεῖν· τὸ δὲ | τῶν ἀρχαγγέλων 1  
μέτοχον ἡρεμίας, τὸ δ' αὖ τῶν ἀγγέλων μονίμως κινούμενον· ἄστατόν γε  
μὴν τὸ τῶν δαιμόνων, καὶ τὸ τῶν ἡρώων ἐπὶ πλέον ὀξύρροπον· τοῖς δ' ἄρ-  
χουσιν ἡρεμαῖον μὲν τοῖς πρώτοις, ταραχῶδες δὲ τοῖς ὑστάτοις σύνεστι·  
ψυχαῖς δ' ἐν κινήσει πολλαῖς μεταβαλλόμενον. 5

5 Καὶ μὴν τό γε ἀποκαθαρτικὸν τῶν ψυχῶν τέλος μὲν ἐστὶν ἐν  
τοῖς θεοῖς, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἀρχαγγέλοις ἀναγωγόν· ἄγγελοι δὲ λύουσι μόνον  
τῶν δεσμῶν τῆς ὕλης, δαίμονες δ' εἰς τὴν φύσιν καθέλκουσιν· ἥρωες δὲ  
κατάγουσιν εἰς τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἔργων· ἄρχοντες δ' ἦτοι τὴν  
προστασίαν τῶν περικοσμίων ἢ τὴν τῶν ἐνύλων ἐπιστάσιαν ἐγχειρίζουσι, 10

[77].9 ὑπερφυοῦς VMh<sup>2</sup>: ὑπερφυῶς h || 11-12 καθαρώτερον cj. Hopf-  
ner: καθαρώτεροι VM || 13 ἐπιδεικνύουσιν VMh<sup>2</sup>: ἀποδεικνύουσιν h || [78].1  
ἄτομον] ἄτομον καὶ h || 4 πρὸ h et (σ p. n.) V<sup>2</sup>: πρὸς VM || 5 ἀγγέλων h  
et (ἀρχ cancell.) V<sup>c</sup>: ἀρχαγγέλων VM || 6 ἔτι M: ἔστι V | post ἔστι (ἔτι)  
add. πλειονος καὶ i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: om. VM || 8 ὑπερέχει h: ὑπάρχει VMh<sup>2</sup> (ἄξιον  
add. i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: om. VM) || 9 ὁμοιώσεως VM: ὁμοιότητος h || [79].3 τὸ<sup>2</sup> h:  
om. VM

The same is true in regard to the degree of light. The images of the gods flash forth brighter than light, while those of the archangels are full of supernatural light, and those of the angels are bright. But daemons glow with smouldering fire. The heroes have a fire blended of diverse elements, and of the archons those that are cosmic reveal a comparatively pure fire, while those that are material show a fire mixed from disparate and opposed elements. Souls produce a fitfully visible light, soiled by the many compounds in the realm of generation.

In accord, then, with what has been said so far, the fire of the gods shines forth indivisible and inexpressible, and fills all the depths of the cosmos in a fiery but non-cosmic manner.<sup>129</sup> The fire of archangels is undivided, and there may be seen a great mass around it, either preceding or following after it. The fire of angels appears divided except in its most perfect forms. That of the daemons is circumscribed in still briefer divisions, and can be expressed in speech, and does not exceed the power of vision of those who are capable of viewing superior beings. That of the heroes has almost the same character, but nevertheless falls short of exact similarity. And as for that of archons, in the case of the higher kind, it is seen to be more transparent, while in the case of that kind immersed in matter, is murkier. That of souls again displays a diverse and multiform fire, blended from many natures around the cosmos. Moreover, the fire of the gods is wholly stable when beheld, that of the archangels has a degree of stability, but that of the angels is permanently set in motion. That of the daemons is unstable, and that of the heroes has still more unstable movement. Stillness is characteristic of primary archons, but turmoil of the lowest. That of souls changes according to multiple movements.

5 Again, the purification of souls attains a perfect degree among the gods, while the characteristic of the archangels is anagogic.<sup>130</sup> Angels do no more than loosen the bonds of matter, whereas daemons draw down the soul towards nature. Heroes lead one downward to a concern with perceptible works. Archons undertake either leadership over cosmic affairs or authority over

<sup>129</sup> Probably a reference to the Chaldaean characterisation of the intelligible world as fiery.

<sup>130</sup> Cf. VIII.8.271.11 on the θεοὶ ἀναγωγοί.

ψυχαι δ' ἐπιφαινόμεναι κατατείνουσί πως ἐπὶ τὴν γένεσιν.

Καὶ μὴν καὶ τότε σκόπει, τὸ καθαρὸν καὶ ἑδραῖον τῆς φαινομένης  
εἰκόνοσ, ὃ πᾶν μὲν ἀποδίδου τοῖς κρείττοσι γένεσιν, ἤδη δὲ τὸ μὲν ὑπέρ-  
λαμπρὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ μονίμως ἰδρυμένον ἀπόνεμε τοῖς θεοῖς, τὸ δὲ  
λαμπρὸν ἑστηκός τε ὥς ἐν ἑτέρῳ δίδου τοῖς ἀρχαγγέλοις, τὸ δ' ἐν ἑτέ- 15  
[80] ρῳ μένον τοῖς ἀγγέλοις. Ἐπὶ θάτερα τοίνυν ἀντιδιαίρει τὸ φερόμενον καὶ 1  
ἀνίδρυτον καὶ ἀναπεπλησμένον ἀλλοτριῶν φύσεων, ὃ πᾶν ταῖς καταδε-  
στέραις ἐναρμόζει τάξεσιν.

Ἄλλ' ἤδη κατὰ τὴν διαφορὰν τῆς συμμίξεως διαιρείσθω καὶ τοῦτο.  
Τοῖς μὲν γὰρ δαίμοσιν ἀτμοὶ περικόσμοι συμμίσγυνται καὶ φέρονται πα- 5  
ρὰ τὴν τοῦ κόσμου κίνησιν ἀστάτως. Ἦρωσι δὲ γενεσιουργοὶ πνευμάτων  
συστάσεις ἀνακεράννυνται, περὶ ἧς καὶ αὐτοὶ συγκινοῦνται· ἄρχοντες δ'  
οἱ μὲν τοῦ κόσμου μένουσιν ὡσαύτως τὸ κοσμικὸν ὅπερ εἶχον ἐμφαίνον-  
τες, οἱ δὲ τῆς ὕλης ὕλικῶν ἰχώρων εἰσὶν ἀνάμεστοι· ψυχαι δὲ περισσῶν  
μολυσμῶν καὶ ἀλλοτριῶν πνευμάτων ἀναπίμπλυνται, μεθ' ὧν καὶ ἐν ταῖς 10  
ἐπιφανείαις ἕκαστον τούτων τῶν γενῶν ἑαυτὸ ἐπιδείκνυσιν.

Δεῖγμα δ' ἔστω σοι οὐ μικρὸν καὶ τὸ δαπανητικὸν τῆς ὕλης ἀθρόως  
ἐπὶ θεῶν· ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν ἀρχαγγέλων τὸ κατὰ βραχὺ αὐτῆς ἀναλωτικόν,  
[81] ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων τὸ | λυτικὸν ἀπ' αὐτῆς καὶ ἀπαγωγόν· ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν 1  
δαιμόνων τὸ διακοσμοῦν αὐτὴν ἐμμελῶς· ἐπὶ δ' αὖ τῶν ἡρώων τὸ συναρ-  
μοζόμενον πρὸς αὐτὴν ἐν μέτροις τοῖς προσήκουσι καὶ ἐπιδεξίως αὐτῆς  
ἐπιμελούμενον. Ἀρχοντες δ' οἱ μὲν τῶν κόσμων ἡγεμόνες παρίστανται  
αὐτῆς ὑπερέχοντες καὶ οὕτως ἑαυτοὺς ἐκφαίνουσιν, οἱ δ' ἔνυλοι παντελῶς 5

[80].4 διαιρείσθω M: διαιρεῖσθαι V || 8 εἶχον V: ἔχον M || 11 ἑαυτὸ  
scr. Parthey: ἑαυτὸν VM || 12 ἔστω V: ἔσται M || 13 αὐτῆς cj. Gale:  
αὐτοῖς VM || [81].2-3 συναρμολοζόμενον M: συναρμολοζόμενον V

material ones. As for souls, when they appear, they provoke a tendency, in one way or another, toward generation.<sup>131</sup>

One should take this into account also: the purity and stability of the image manifested in a vision which one may attribute as a whole to the superior classes, but what is exceedingly brilliant and remains fixed in itself, you may attribute to the gods; what is brilliant but appearing to be based in something else, ascribe to the archangels; and that which is definitely based in something else, ascribe to angels. Distinguish, on the other hand, everything which is carried this way and that, and is not fixed, but permeated by alien natures, which is to be assigned to all the inferior ranks of being.

But we can actually make a distinction according to the differences of degree of mixture. For cosmic vapours are mixed in with (the appearance of) daemons, and they exhibit an unsteady movement according to the movement of the cosmos. In the case of heroes we find the admixture of generative accumulations of pneumatic auras in accord with which accumulations they themselves are also moved. Of the archons, those that are cosmic remain in the same state, showing forth the cosmic power that they have; while those that are material are contaminated with material fluids. Souls abound in excessive pollutions, and the sort of alien spirits with which each of these kinds shows itself in their manifestations.

An important means of identification for you should lie in the mode of the consumption of matter: it is used all at once in the case of the gods. In the case of the archangels there is consumption of it over a short period, while in the case of angels there is a process of dissolution and absorption of it. In the case of daemons there is a harmonious organisation of it. In the case, again, of heroes, one notes adaptation to it in suitable proportions, and a clever managing of it. Of the archons, those who are rulers of the cosmos take a superior attitude to it, and manifest themselves in this way, whereas those who are material reveal themselves as

<sup>131</sup> Cf. Lydus, *Mens.* 83.13ff. Wünsch, who writes that Iamblichus divides the tribe of daemons below the moon into three classes: those nearest the earth are punitive, those in the air are purificatory, and those in the zone of the moon itself are concerned with salvation, a class also known as heroes. He also states that they were ruled over by a supreme daemon, probably to be identified with Pluto.

ἀναπεπλησμένους ἑαυτοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς ὕλης ἐπιδεικνύουσι· καὶ τῶν ψυχῶν αἱ μὲν καθαρὰι τῆς ὕλης ἐκτός, αἱ δ' ἐναντίαι περιεχόμεναι ὑπ' αὐτῆς ἐπιφαίνονται.

6 Καὶ μὴν τὰ γε ἀπὸ τῶν ἐπιφανειῶν δῶρα οὔτε ἴσα ἐστὶ πάντα οὔτε καρποὺς ἔχει τοὺς αὐτούς· ἀλλ' ἡ μὲν τῶν θεῶν παρουσία δίδωσιν 10 ἡμῖν ὑγείαν σώματος, ψυχῆς ἀρετήν, νοῦ καθαρότητα καὶ πάντων, ὡς ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν, τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν ἐπὶ τὰς οἰκειάς ἀρχὰς ἀναγωγὴν. Καὶ τὸ μὲν ψυχρὸν ἐν ἡμῖν καὶ φθοροποιὸν ἀφανίζει, τὸ δὲ θερμὸν αὔξει καὶ δυνα- τώτερον καὶ ἐπικρατέστερον ἀπεργάζεται, ποιεῖ τε πάντα ἀναμετρεῖν τῇ 15 ψυχῇ καὶ τῷ νῷ, νοητῇ τε ἁρμονίᾳ τὸ φῶς ἐλλάμπει, καὶ τὸ μὴ ὄν σῶμα [82] ὡς | σῶμα τοῖς τῆς ψυχῆς ὀφθαλμοῖς διὰ τῶν τοῦ σώματος ἐπιδείκνυσιν· 1 ἡ δὲ τῶν ἀρχαγγέλων τὰ αὐτὰ μὲν καὶ αὕτη παρέχει, πλην οὔτε αἰεὶ οὔτε ἐπὶ πάντων οὔτε διαρκῇ οὔτε τέλεια οὔτε ἀναφαίρετα τὰ ἀγαθὰ δίδωσι, τρόπῳ τε παρισωμένῳ τῆς ἐπιφανείας ἐπιλάμπει· ἡ δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων ἔτι 5 μεριστὰ μᾶλλον τὰ ἀγαθὰ δωρεῖται διηρημένως, καὶ τὴν ἐνέργειαν δι' ἧς ἐπιφαίνεται πολὺν λειπομένην ἔχει τοῦ συνειληφότος αὐτὴν ἐν ἑαυτῷ τε- λείου φωτός· ἡ δὲ τῶν δαιμόνων βαρεῖ μὲν τὸ σῶμα καὶ νόσοις κολάζει, καθέλκει δὲ καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐπὶ τὴν φύσιν, σωμαίων δὲ καὶ τῆς συγγενοῦς τοῖς σώμασιν αἰσθήσεως οὐκ ἀφίστησι, τοὺς δ' ἐπὶ τὸ πῦρ σπεύδοντας κατέχει περὶ τὸν τῆδε τόπον, τῶν δὲ τῆς εἰμαρμένης δεσμῶν οὐκ ἀπολύει· 10 ἡ δὲ τῶν ἡρώων παραπλήσια μὲν ἔχει τὰ ἄλλα πρὸς τὴν τῶν δαιμόνων, ἰδιαίνει δ' ἐν τῷ καὶ πρὸς ἔργα τινὰ γενναῖα καὶ μεγάλα ἀνεγείρειν· ἡ δὲ τῶν ἀρχόντων αὐτοπτικὴ δεῖξις περικόσμια μὲν ἀγαθὰ τῶν περικοσμίων [83] δίδωσι καὶ τὰ τοῦ βίου πάντα πράγματα, ὕλικά δὲ ἡ τῶν ὕλικῶν | ὀρέ- 1 γει καὶ ὅσα χθονία ἐστὶν ἔργα· ἀλλὰ μὴν ἡ γε τῶν ψυχῶν θέα τῶν μὲν ἀχράντων καὶ ἐν ἀγγέλων τάξει ἰδρυμένων ἀναγωγός ἐστι καὶ ψυχῆς σω- τήριος, ἐπ' ἐλπίδι τε ἱερᾷ ἐκφαίνεται, καὶ ὧν ἡ ἐλπίς ἡ ἱερὰ ἀντιποιεῖται

[82].2 παρέχει cj. Gale: περιτρέχει VM || 9 αἰσθήσεως V: αἰσθήσεων M | ἀφίστησι V: ἀφίησι M || 13 περικόσμια M: παρακόσμια V || 14 ἡ scr. Gale: ἡ VM & i. m. V<sup>2</sup>

wholly taken up with matter; and with souls, those that are pure reveal themselves as wholly removed from matter, but those of opposite nature show themselves encompassed by it.

6 Further, the gifts that arise from these manifestations are not all equal, nor do they bear the same fruits. But the advent of the gods gives to us health of body, virtue of soul, purity of intellect, and in a word, the elevation of everything within us to their proper principles.<sup>132</sup> It removes the cold and the destructive element in us, while it increases the vital heat and renders it more powerful and dominant, and makes all things commensurate with soul and intellect, makes our light shine with intelligible harmony, and shows what is not body as body to the eyes of the soul by means of those of the body. The advent of the archangels produces the same effects as that of the gods, except that it gives good things neither always nor in all cases—neither sufficient, complete, nor inalienable; and it illuminates us in a manner proportionate to their appearance. The advent of angels confers separately goods still more particular, and the activity by which it is manifested is far short of the perfect light that embraces it in itself. That of daemons weighs down the body, and afflicts it with diseases, and drags the soul down to the realm of nature, and does not remove from bodies their innate sense-perception, detains here in this region those who are hastening towards the divine fire,<sup>133</sup> and does not free them from the chains of fate. The advent of heroes is similar in most ways to that of daemons, but it is distinctive in arousing us to noble and great deeds. The direct<sup>134</sup> manifestations of archons, if they are cosmic, bestow cosmic goods and all things in life; but if they are material, dispense material gifts and such works as are earthly. Furthermore, the appearance of souls, if immaculate and established in the order of angels, is elevating and salutary to the soul. It manifests itself to

<sup>132</sup> With ἀναγωγή here there is a merging of Platonic and Chaldaean notions; for the Chaldaeans, the term referred to a freeing of the soul from the body and an elevation to the mystical fire. For a Platonist, it still has the sense of *Resp.* 7.517b4–521c; 533d2, where it refers to the soul's ascent toward a contemplation of the Good. See Lewy (1978, 487–79).

<sup>133</sup> See *Orac. chald.* frg. 115.

<sup>134</sup> On the direct, manifest or *autoptic* visions cf. Proclus, *In Resp.* 2.119.27; 133.17; 155.18; 242.11; 242.15; *Comm. Tim.* 1.302.13; 3.69.16. Cf. also *PGM* VII. 335; IV. 221.

ἀγαθῶν τούτων παρέχει τὴν δόσιν· ἡ δὲ τῶν ἐτέρων καταγωγὸς ἐπὶ τὴν 5  
γένεσιν ὑπάρχει, φθείρει τε τοὺς τῆς ἐλπίδος καρποὺς καὶ παθῶν πληροῖ  
προσηλούντων τοὺς θεωροῦντας τοῖς σώμασιν.

7 Καὶ μὴν τῆς γε τάξεως, ἣν οἱ ὁρώμενοι ἔχουσι, γίνεται ἐν  
ταῖς αὐτοψίαις ἐπίδειξις, τῶν μὲν θεῶν θεοὺς ἢ ἀγγέλους ἔχόντων περὶ 10  
ἑαυτοῦς, τῶν δ' ἀρχαγγέλων προπομποὺς ἀγγέλους ἢ σὺν ἑαυτοῖς συντε-  
ταγμένους ἢ κατόπιν ἐπομένους ἢ ἄλλην τινὰ δορυφορίαν πολλὴν ἀγγέλων  
περὶ ἑαυτοῦς παραβαλλομένων, ἀγγέλων δὲ τὰ οἰκεῖα ἔργα τῆς τάξεως ἐφ'  
ἧς ἐπιβεβήκασιν συνεπιδεικνύντων, τῶν δ' ἀγαθῶν δαιμόνων τὰ σφέτε-  
ρα δημιουργήματα καὶ ἀγαθὰ, ἃ δωροῦνται, συνθεωρεῖσθαι παρεχόντων,  
[84] τῶν | δὲ τιμωρῶν δαιμόνων τὰ εἶδη τῶν τιμωριῶν ἐμφαινόντων, τῶν δ' 1  
ἄλλων ὅπως πονηρῶν θηρία τινὰ βλαβερά καὶ αἰμοβόρα καὶ ἄγρια  
περικειμένων, ἀρχόντων δὲ μοίρας τινὰς κοσμικὰς μεθ' ἑαυτῶν ἐπιδει-  
κνύντων, τῶν δ' ἄλλων ἀρχόντων τὴν ἀταξίαν καὶ πλημμέλειαν τῆς ὕλης  
ἐφελκομένων· ψυχῆς δὲ τῆς μὲν ὅλης καὶ ἐν οὐδενὶ τῶν κατὰ μέρος εἶδει 5  
κατεχομένης, πῦρ ὁρᾶται ἀνείδεον περὶ ὅλον τὸν κόσμον ἐνδεικνύμενον τὴν  
ὅλην καὶ μίαν καὶ ἄτομον καὶ ἀνείδεον τοῦ παντός ψυχὴν· τῆς δ' ἀποκε-  
καθαρμένης πύριος ὁ τύπος βλέπεται καὶ ἄχραντον καὶ ἀμιγὲς τὸ πῦρ,  
τό τε ἐγκραδιαῖον αὐτῆς φῶς καὶ τὸ εἶδος καθαρὸν καὶ ἐδραῖον ὁρᾶται,  
καὶ μετὰ τοῦ ἀναγωγοῦ ἡγεμόνος ἀκολουθεῖ τῇ ἀγαθῇ θελήσει χαίρουσα, 10  
καὶ αὐτὴ τὴν οἰκειάν ἑαυτῇ τάξιν ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων ἐκφαίνουσα· ἡ δὲ κάτω  
νεύουσα δεσμῶν καὶ κολάσεων ἐπισύρεται σημεῖα, ὕλικῶν τε πνευμάτων  
βρίθει συστάσεσι, καὶ ταραχαῖς ὕλης ἀνωμάλοις κατέχεται, δαιμόνων τε  
γενεσιουργῶν ἐπιστασίας ὁρᾶται προστσηαμένη πρὸ ἑαυτῆς.

[83].9 αὐτοψίαις M: αὐτοψυχίαις V | ἐπίδειξις VM: ἐνδειξις cj. Gale  
|| 12 παραβαλλομένων VM: περιβαλλομένων (ε s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || [84].9 ἐγκραδιαῖον  
VM (forma epica oraculorum chaldaicorum?): ἐγκραδιαῖον scr. BQ

the accompaniment of a holy hope, and provides the goods that a holy hope seeks after. But the appearance of the other souls leads us downward into the realm of becoming, ruins the fruits of hope, and fills those who view it with passions which nail them fast to their bodies.<sup>135</sup>

7 Moreover, in the divine visions we get a display of the order maintained by the objects of vision, the gods having gods or archangels about themselves; archangels calling up about themselves angels as escorts, either arrayed with themselves or following after them, or, in some other way, being accompanied by a copious bodyguard of angels;<sup>136</sup> that of angels revealing at the same time the works proper to the rank which they have attained; good daemons presenting for contemplation their own productions, and the goods which they bestow; punitive daemons<sup>137</sup> displaying their forms of punishment; the other daemons who are wicked in whatsoever way surrounded by harmful beasts, greedy for blood and savage; (cosmic) archons manifesting along with themselves certain cosmic allotments; the other class of archons attracting the disorder and faultiness of matter; that soul which is whole, and not constrained by any form of particularity is seen as a formless fire manifesting itself around the entire cosmos as a whole, indivisible and formless soul of the All;<sup>138</sup> in the case of the purified soul, the impression manifested is fiery, the fire being undefiled and unmixed; its interior light and form appear pure and stable, and follow after the leader elevating it while rejoicing in his good will, and itself displays its proper order in its works. But the soul that tends downward drags in its train signs of chains and punishments, is weighed down by concretions of material spirits, and held fast by the disorderly inequalities of matter, and is seen submitting itself to the authority of daemons concerned with generation.

<sup>135</sup> Cf. Plato, *Phaed.* 83d.

<sup>136</sup> Cf. *PGM* I. 205–210 for the appearance of a god surrounded by a myriad of angels and archangels.

<sup>137</sup> The first mention of evil daemons in the *De mysteriis*. Cf. III.31.178; X.7.293.

<sup>138</sup> A reference to the cosmic Hecate in the *Chaldaean Oracles*. Unlike the Hecate of the magicians, that of the *Oracles* is not a chthonic deity, but a supra-celestial goddess who descends at the time of the epiphanies. See Lewy (1978, 243–45).



[85] | Καὶ συλλήβδην φάναι, πάντα τὰ γένη ταῦτα τὰς οἰκείας τάξεις 1  
ἐπιδεικνύουσιν ἅμα μεθ' ἑαυτῶν· ἤδη τοίνυν καὶ τὰς χώρας ἃς εἰλήχασιν καὶ  
τὰς λήξεις ἐν αἷς ἐνοικοῦσιν παραδεικνύουσιν, ἀέριον μὲν πῦρ οἱ ἀέριοι,  
χθόνιον δὲ καὶ μελάντερον οἱ χθόνιοι, λαμπρότερον δ' οἱ οὐράνιοι ἐπιδει-  
κνύοντες· ἐν αὐτοῖς δὲ τούτοις τοῖς τρισὶν ὅροις τριπλᾶς τάξεις, ἀρχῆς 5  
καὶ μεσότητος καὶ τέλους, ὅλα τὰ γένη κατενεύματο, τὰ μὲν τῶν θεῶν  
τὰ ἀκρότατα καὶ καθαρώτατα αἷτια τῆς τριπλῆς τάξεως ταύτης ἐπιδει-  
κνύοντα, τὰ δὲ τῶν ἀρχαγγέλων (..., τὰ δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων) ὡς ἐκδιδόμενα  
ἀπὸ τῶν ἀρχαγγέλων, ὑπηρετικά δὲ τούτοις τὰ τῶν δαιμόνων ἐπιφανό-  
μενα καὶ τὰ τῶν ἡρώων διακονικά ὡσαύτως, οὐ μέντοι κατὰ τὰς αὐτὰς 10  
ὑπηρεσίας τοῖς δαίμοσιν, ἀλλὰ καθ' ἑτέρας αὐτῶν καὶ διαφερούσας· τὰ δὲ  
τῶν ἀρχόντων ὡς ἔχουσι τὴν ἐπιβάλλουσαν ἑαυτοῖς ἢ περὶ τὸν κόσμον ἢ  
τὴν ὕλην ἐπιστάσιαν· τὰ δὲ τῶν ψυχῶν ὡς πάντα ἔσχατα τῶν κρείττωνων·  
[86] ὅθεν δὴ καὶ τόπους μεθ' ἑαυτῶν συμφαίνει τὰ πρῶτα τοὺς πρῶτους καὶ 1  
τὰ δευτέρω τοὺς δευτέρους ἐν ἐκάστῳ τῶν τριῶν τούτων, καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ὡς  
ἕκαστα διατέτακται.

8 Καὶ μὴν τὴν γε λεπτότητα τοῦ φωτὸς οἱ μὲν θεοὶ τοσαύτην ἐπι-  
λάμπουσιν ὡς μὴ δύνασθαι χωρεῖν αὐτὴν τοὺς τοῦ σώματος ὀφθαλμούς, 5  
ἀλλὰ καὶ ταῦτο πάσχειν τῶν ἰχθύων τοῖς ἀπὸ θολερᾶς καὶ παχείας ὑγρό-  
τητος εἰς ἀέρα λεπτὸν καὶ διαφανῆ ἀνασπασμένοις. Καὶ γὰρ οἱ ἄνθρωποι  
οἱ θεωροὶ τοῦ θείου πυρός, οὐ δυνάμενοι τὴν λεπτότητα τοῦ θείου πυρὸς  
ἀναπνεῖν, ὀλιγοδρανοῦσιν, ὡς ἰδεῖν φαίνονται, καὶ τοῦ συμφύτου πνεύμα-  
τος ἀποκλείονται. Ἀρχάγγελοι δ' οὐκ ἀνεκτὴν μὲν εἰς τὸ ἀναπνεῖν οὐδ' 10  
αὐτοὶ τὴν καθαρότητα ἀποστίλβουσιν, οὐ μὴν ὁμοίως γε ἀφόρητον τοῖς  
κρείττοσιν. Αἱ δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων παρουσίαι φορητὴν τοῦ ἀέρος τὴν κρᾶσιν  
ἐπιτελοῦσιν, ὥστε δύνασθαι αὐτὴν καὶ τοῖς θεουργοῖς συνάπτεσθαι. Ἐπὶ

[85].2 ἅμα μεθ' (με i. m.) V<sup>2</sup>: ἅμα θ' VM || 5 τάξεις VMB: τάξεως (ω s. v.) cj. B<sup>4</sup> || 8 ἀρχαγγέλων VM: ἀγγέλων (ἀρχ p. n.) V<sup>2</sup> lacunam cj. Saffrey || 12 ἔχουσι cj. Gale: ἔχουσιν VM | ἐπιβάλλουσιν cj. B: ἐπιθάλλουσιν VM || [86].5 τοῦ σώματος add. V<sup>2</sup>: om. V (lac. 17 ll.) et M (lac. 11 ll.) ἀμβλυποὺς cj. i. m. B<sup>3</sup> σωματικούς cj. Gale || 6 ταῦτ'ό scripsi: αὐτὸ codd. || 8 (ante τὴν) διὰ add. cj. B<sup>4</sup>: om. VM

In short, all these kinds manifest their proper orders along with themselves; in line with this, then, they also show the regions which they have been assigned and the dwelling places which they inhabit: aerial beings, aerial fire; earthly beings, a fire earthly and more murky; celestial beings display a brighter fire. Within these three boundaries we find all these kinds distributed in the threefold order of beginning, middle and end; those of the gods manifesting the highest and purest causes of this triple order, those of the archangels . . . <those of the angels><sup>139</sup> as handed down to them by the archangels; those of the daemons being shown as subordinate to these, and those of the heroes in like manner subordinate, not indeed covering the same ministrations as the daemons but other, different ones of their own; those of the archons in accordance with the dominion assigned to them either of the cosmos or of matter; those of souls as in the wholly last rank of superior beings. Hence they all manifest their proper places along with themselves: the first have the first place, and the second the second, in each of these three regions, and the others according to their particular rank.

8 Furthermore, the fineness of the light which the gods radiate<sup>140</sup> is such that the eyes of the body are not able to tolerate it, but even suffer the same thing as fishes when drawn from the muddy and thick wet element to thin and transparent air.<sup>141</sup> For human beings who gain a vision of the divine fire, since they are not able to breathe the fineness of the divine fire, they become feeble, to all appearances, and are shut off from the vital breath that is cognate to them.<sup>142</sup> Archangels radiate a purity not endurable to breathe, but nevertheless not as unbearable as that of the beings superior to them. The advent of angels leaves the temperature of the air endurable, so that it is actually possible for theurgists

<sup>139</sup> There is a lacuna in the text at this point.

<sup>140</sup> ἐπίλαμψις is an Iamblichean technical term. For it and its relatives cf. I.12.40.16; 41.4; II.3.71.8; II.4.78.2; II.6.81.16; 82.4; II.8.86.4-5; IV.3.185.6.

<sup>141</sup> According to Aristotle, who discusses respiration in the *Parva Naturalia*, fish required water for cooling, so a fish out of water would overheat: *De resp.* 9.475a; 10.476a; 19.479b. While θολόω was generally used of water, Theophrastus at *De igne* 24.5 describes noxious air as θολερώδης.

<sup>142</sup> *PGM* IV. 439 mentions "drawing in breath from the rays." Cf. also *PGM* IV. 540. See also Shaw (1995, 223-24).

δὲ τῶν δαιμόνων οὐδὲν ὁ ὅλος ἀήρ συμπάσχει, οὐδ' ὁ περὶ αὐτοὺς περικεί-  
 [87] μενος γίννεται λεπτότερος, οὐδὲ φῶς | προτρέχει εἰς ὅπερ προλαβὼν καὶ 1  
 προκατασχὼν τὸν ἀέρα τὸ ἑαυτῶν εἶδος ἐκφαίνουσιν· οὐδὲ περὶ αὐτοὺς αὐ-  
 γή τις περιλάμπει τὰ πανταχόθεν. Ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν ἡρώων γῆς μὲν μέρη τινὰ  
 συγκινεῖται καὶ φόφοι περιηχοῦσιν· ὁ δ' ὅλος ἀήρ οὐ γίννεται λεπτότερος  
 οὐδὲ ἀσύμμετρος τοῖς θεουργοῖς, ὥστε δύνασθαι αὐτὸν χωρεῖν. Ἐπὶ δὲ 5  
 τῶν ἀρχόντων περιβολή μὲν πλειόνων φασμάτων περιθιᾷ δυσανάσχετος,  
 ἥτοι κοσμικὴ ἢ περιγίσιος, οὐ μὴν ὑπερκόσμιός γε λεπτότης οὐδ' ἡ τῶν  
 ἄκρων στοιχείων παραγίνεται. Ταῖς δὲ ψυχικαῖς ἐπιφανείαις συγγενῆς  
 μᾶλλον ἔστιν ὁ φαινόμενος ἀήρ, καὶ δέχεται αὐτῶν τὴν περιγραφὴν ἐν  
 ἑαυτῷ συνηρτημένος πρὸς αὐτάς. 10

9 Τελευταῖον τοίνυν αἱ τῶν καλούντων τῆς ψυχῆς διαθέσεις ἐπὶ  
 μὲν τῆς ἐπιφανείας τῶν θεῶν παθῶν ἐξηλλαγμένην καὶ ὑπερέχουσαν πα-  
 ραδέχονται τὴν τελειότητα ἐνέργειάν τε κρείττονα παντελῶς, καὶ θεῖον  
 ἔρωτα καὶ εὐφροσύνην ἀμήχανον ὅσην μεταλαγχάνουσιν· ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν ἀρ-  
 [88] χαγγέλων | ἄχραντον κατάστασιν νοεράν τε θεωρίαν καὶ δύναμιν ἄτρε- 1  
 πτον παραλαμβάνουσιν· ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων τὴν κατὰ λόγον σοφίαν καὶ  
 ἀλήθειαν ἀρετὴν τε καθαρὰν καὶ βεβαίαν γνῶσιν καὶ τάξιν σύμμετρον  
 μεταλαγχάνουσιν· ὅταν δὲ τοὺς δαίμονας θεωρῶσιν, ὄρεξιν τῆς γενέσεως  
 καὶ τῆς φύσεως ἐπιθυμίαν τῶν τε καθ' εἰμαρμένην ἔργων ἀποπλήρωσιν, 5  
 δύναμιν τε ἀποτελεστικὴν τῶν τοιούτων πράξεων παραδέχονται· ἐὰν δὲ  
 τοὺς ἥρωας, ἄλλα τε τοιαῦτα ἦθη ἀποφέρονται, καὶ τῶν διατεινόντων εἰς  
 τὴν κοινωνίαν ψυχῶν πολλὰ σπουδάσματα μεταλαμβάνουσιν· ἥνίκα δ' ἂν  
 τοῖς ὄρχουσιν ἐνάπτωνται, κοσμικὰς κινήσεις ἢ ἐνύλους τῇ ψυχῇ συγκι-  
 νοῦνται. Μετὰ δὲ τῆς θέας τῶν ψυχῶν γενεσιουργοὺς ἐφέσεις καὶ συμφνεῖς 10

[87].4 ὁ δ' ὅλος V: οὐδ' ὅλος M || 6 περιβολή (ε et ι s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: παραβολή  
 VM || 9 περιγραφὴν cj. Gale: παραγραφὴν VM || 12 θεῶν παθῶν scripsi:  
 παθῶν VM θεῶν (πα p. n., ε s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> θεῶν τῶν παθῶν cj. Gale Sodano || [88].2  
 σοφίαν M et (φιλο cancell.) V<sup>2</sup>: φιλοσοφίαν V || 5 ἀποπλήρωσιν (ν ex alt. σ)  
 V<sup>2</sup>: ἀποπλήρωσις VM || 9 ἐνύλους V: ἐνυλα M

to engage with it.<sup>143</sup> In the case of daemons, the air as a whole feels no sympathy, and that which surrounds them does not become finer, nor does any light precede them into which they can manifest their own form by taking over and occupying the air in advance, and there is no bright radiance shining about them from every side. In the case of heroes, certain parts of the earth are moved and noises echo around; but the air as a whole does not become too fine or unsuitable for the theurgists, so that it is possible for them to tolerate it. With the archons, whether of the cosmic order or that involved with the earth, there is an escort of numerous apparitions surrounding them, difficult to bear, but no refinement of a hypercosmic nature occurs, nor even that of the highest (cosmic) elements. But with the epiphanies of souls, the air that manifests itself is more cognate to them, and receives their forms in itself through being attached to them.

9 Finally, then, the dispositions of the souls of those making invocations receive, at the epiphany of the gods, a perfection freed from and superior to passions, and at the same time an activity entirely better (than themselves), and they participate in a love divine and an enormous gladness of mind; in the case of archangels, they gain a pure settled state, intellectual contemplation and stable power; in the case of the angels, they obtain a rational wisdom, truth, pure virtue, a firm knowledge, and a proportional order. But when they contemplate daemons, they receive a desire for the realm of generation, a longing for nature and for the fulfilment of the works of necessity,<sup>144</sup> and a power for completing such activities. If they view heroes, they take away with them other such characteristics as these, and participate in many of the zealous pursuits relating to the commitments of souls; when they are involved with archons, they are moved in soul, either in line with the cosmos or with the material realm. With the contemplation of souls, they arrive at generative desires

<sup>143</sup> In *Corp. herm.* 1.4–5 the λόγος enables nature to tolerate the elements of πῦρ and πνεῦμα.

<sup>144</sup> Purification, on the other hand, tends to free them from the works of necessity; cf. Iamblichus, *De an.* 43 Dillon and Finamore. *Comm. Tim.* frg. 87 reveals that our προαίρεσις administers fate but cannot release us from its bonds; to exercise free will is a divine privilege granted to us only through the miracle of Theurgy; see Clarke (2001) and Rist (1974, 103–22).

ἐπιστασίας κομίζονται ἔνεκα τῆς τῶν σωμάτων ἐπιμελείας, ἄλλα τε ὅσα τούτων ἐστὶν ἐχόμενα.

Σὺν δὴ τούτοις ἡ μὲν τῶν θεῶν ἐπιφάνεια ἀλήθειαν παρέχει καὶ δύναμιν, ἔργων τε κατορθώσεις καὶ δόσεις ἀγαθῶν τῶν μεγίστων, ἡ δὲ  
 [89] τῶν ἄλλων τὰ σύμμετρα ἐπὶ τῆς ἐκάστων τάξεως οἰκείως ἕκαστα χο- 1  
 ρηγεῖ· οἷον ἡ τῶν ἀρχαγγέλων ἀλήθειαν, οὐχ ἀπλῶς περὶ πάντων ἀλλὰ διωρισμένως ἐπὶ τινων, καὶ ταύτην οὐκ ἀεὶ ἀλλὰ ποτέ, οὐδ' ἀδιορίστως πρὸς ἅπαντας ἢ πανταχοῦ ἀλλὰ διωρισμένως ὡδὶ ἢ πρὸς τόδε τι δίδω- 5  
 σι, δύναμιν τε ὡσαύτως οὐ συλλήβδην πάντων οὐδ' ἀδιακρίτως ἀεὶ οὐδὲ 5  
 πανταχοῦ, ἀλλὰ ποτέ καὶ ποὺ συλλαμβάνει. Ἡ δὲ τῶν ἀγγέλων τούτων ἔτι μᾶλλον ἀπομερίζει τὰς ἀεὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἕλαττον ἀφοριζόμενας περιγραφὰς ἐν τῇ τῶν ἀγαθῶν δόσει. Ἡ δὲ τῶν δαιμόνων οὐκ ἐτι τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς ἀγα-  
 θὰ δωρεῖται, ἀλλ' ἤτοι τὰ τοῦ σώματος ἢ τῶν τῷ σώματι προσηκόντων, καὶ ταῦτα ὁπόταν ἡ τοῦ κόσμου τάξις ἐπιτρέπη. Κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ δὲ καὶ ἡ 10  
 τῶν ἡρώων παρέχει τὰ δεύτερα καὶ τρίτα ἀγαθὰ, στοχαζομένη καὶ τῆς τῶν ψυχῶν περιγείου καὶ περικοσμίου πολιτείας ὅλης. Ἡ δὲ τῶν ἀρχόν-  
 των κοσμικὰ μὲν ἢ ἑτέρα καὶ τὰ τοῦ βίου πάντα δωρεῖται, ἡ δ' ἑτέρα καὶ ὑποδεεστέρα τῶν ἐνύλων οὐκ ὀλίγα παρέχει πλεονεκτήματα. Ψυχὰι  
 [90] δ' ἐπιφαινόμεναι τὰ πρὸς τὸν ἀνθρώπινον βίον συμβαλλόμενα τοῖς θεω- 1  
 ροῖς προξενούσιν. Καὶ οὕτως ἡμῖν κατὰ τὴν οἰκείαν ἐκάστων τάξιν καὶ ἡ ἀπ' αὐτῶν δόσις οἰκείως διακέκριται, συγγενῇ τε εἴληφε τὴν ὅλην ἀπό-  
 κρισιν περὶ ὧν ἐν ταῖς ἐπιφανείαις αὐτῶν ἐπεζήτησας. Τοσαῦτα δὴ ὅν ἡμῖν καὶ περὶ τούτων εἰρήσθω. 5

**10** Ἄ δ' αὐτὸς ἡμῖν συνεισφέρεις εἰς τὴν περὶ τούτων διάγνω-  
 σιν, εἴτε ὡς οἰκείαν γνώμην ἀποφαινόμενος εἴτε ὡς παρ' ἄλλων ἀκούσας, οὐκ ἔστιν ἀληθὴ οὐδ' ὀρθῶς λεγόμενα. Λέγεις μὲν γὰρ τὸ περιαντολο-  
 γεῖν καὶ τὸ ποιὸν φάντασμα φαντάζειν κοινὸν εἶναι θεοῖς καὶ δαίμοσι καὶ τοῖς κρείττοσι γένεσιν ἅπασιν. Τὸ δ' οὐκ ἔστι τοιοῦτον ὅποιον ὑπολαμ- 10  
 βάνεις· διδαχῇ μὲν γὰρ τῆς οἰκείας οὐσίας θεὸς καὶ ἄγγελος καὶ δαίμων ἀγαθὸς χρῆται πρὸς ἀνθρώπων· προσθήκη δὲ μείζονι ἐν τοῖς λόγοις τῆς ὑπαρχούσης δυνάμεως ἢ τῶν οἰκείων ἀγαθῶν οὐδαμῶς χρῆται· ἢ τε γὰρ ἀλήθεια συννπάσχει τοῖς θεοῖς, ὥσπερ καὶ ἡλίῳ τὸ φῶς κατ' οὐσίαν συν-  
 [91] υφέστηκεν· καὶ ἅμα | οὐδενὸς ἐνδεᾶ τὸν θεόν φαμεν εἶναι κάλλους οὐδέ 1  
 τινος ἀρετῆς ἢν οἷόν τ' ἐστὶ διὰ λόγων αὐτῷ προσθεῖναι. Καὶ μὴν οἱ γε

[88].11 τῆς M et s. v. V<sup>2</sup>: om. V || [89].7 περιγραφὰς M et (ε et ι s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: παραγραφὰς V || [90].1 συμβαλλόμενα cj. B: συμβαλλόμενα M συμβαλλόμεναι V || 9 ποιὸν VM: εἰδωλοποιὸν (εἰδωλο i. m.) V<sup>2</sup> || [91].2 αὐτῷ cj. B<sup>c</sup>: αὐτοῦ VM αὐτῶν B ante correct. et i. m.

and congenital solicitude for the care of bodies and such other matters as depend on these.

Along with these, the epiphany of the gods provides truth and power, success in deeds and gifts of the greatest goods; that of the others duly furnishes what is correspondent to the rank of each; for example, that of the archangels (offers) truth, not essentially in regard to all things, but separately in regard to some: and this not always, but on occasion, and not indefinitely to all or everywhere, but sometimes, and in some particular way, confers it: so it does not confer power in the same way upon all things, nor at all times, nor in all places, but rather sometimes and in some particular way. The epiphany of angels provides even more than the archangels and, with progressively lesser limitations, is the giver of good things. The epiphany of daemons no longer confers goods of the soul, but either those of the body or which belong to the body, and those only when the order of the cosmos permits. In the same way, the epiphany of heroes furnishes the goods of the second and third order, aimed at the terrestrial and cosmic government of the souls as a whole, terrestrial and cosmic. As for the epiphany of the archons, the one kind gives cosmic goods and all those of life, the other, inferior kind, provides in abundance the advantages in the area of material things. Souls, when appearing, procure for those contemplating them goods that contribute to human life. And so, following the order proper to each kind, we have set forth the type of gift proper to them, and have a complete and fitting response to your queries in regard to their epiphanies. And that is enough for us on that question.

**10** What you yourself contribute to the analysis of these questions, whether declaring your own personal opinions or having heard them from others, is neither true nor correctly expressed. You say that self-advertisement and the presentation of certain types of illusion are common to gods, daemons and all superior beings. But the situation is not such as you suppose: a god, an angel and a good daemon give instruction about their proper essence to a human being, but they never, in their communications, indulge in any exaggeration of their position or of the benefits coming from them. For truth is coexistent with the gods, just as light is essentially connected with the sun. At the same time, we say that the divine lacks nothing of beauty or any virtue,

ἄγγελοι καὶ δαίμονες ἀπὸ θεῶν ἀεὶ παραλαμβάνουσι τὴν ἀλήθειαν· ὥστε οὐδὲν οὐδέποτε παρὰ ταύτην λέγουσι, τέλειοί τε ὄντες κατὰ τὴν αὐτὴν οὐσίαν ἐκότεροι οὐδὲν αὐτῇ προσθεῖναι πλεῖον εἰς δοξολογίαν δύνανται. 5

Πότε οὖν συμβαίνει τὸ λεγόμενον ὑπὸ σοῦ ἀπατηλόν, τὸ τῆς περιαντολογίας; ἤνίκα ἂν ἁμάρτημά τι συμβαίνει περὶ τὴν θεουργικὴν τέχνην, καὶ μὴ οἷα δεῖ τὰ αὐτοπτικὰ ἀγάλματα ἀλλ' ἕτερα ἀνθ' ἑτέρων ἀπαντήσῃ· τότε γὰρ ὑποδύμενα τὰ καταδεέστερα τὸ τῶν σεμνοτέρων τάξεων σχῆμα, προσποιεῖται ἐκεῖνο εἶναι ὅπερ ὑποδέδυκε, καὶ ἐνταῦθα ἀλαζόνας 10 προῖεται λόγους καὶ μείζονας τῆς παρούσης αὐτοῖς δυνάμεως. Ἄτε γὰρ οἶμαι τῆς πρώτης ἀρχῆς κιβδηλὸν παραφνομένης πολλὸν τὸ ψεῦδος ἐκ τῆς παρατροπῆς ἐπιρρεῖ, ὃ δεῖ δὴ τοὺς ἱερέας καταμανθάνειν ἀπὸ τῆς ὅλης τάξεως ἐν τοῖς φάσμασιν, ἣν οὐ τηροῦντα | διελέγχεται, καὶ ἀποδοκιμάζειν 1 αὐτῶν τὴν πεπλασμένην προσποίησιν, ὥς οὐδαμῶς ὑπάρχουσιν ἀληθινῶν καὶ ἀγαθῶν πνευμάτων. Οὐδὲ δεῖ τὰ ἁμαρτήματα παραφέρειν ἐν τῇ ἀληθινῇ κρίσει τῶν ὄντων· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐπιστημῶν ἢ τεχνῶν ἀφ' ὧν διασφάλλονται τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς ἔργα δοκιμάζομεν. 5

Μὴ τοίνυν μηδ' ἐνταῦθα τὰ μόλις καὶ διὰ μυρίων ἀγώνων κατορθούμενα ἀπὸ τῶν ἐξ ἐπιδρομῆς ἁμαθῶς ἐπιτηδόντων τῇ θεαγωγίᾳ χαρὰ κτήριζε· πλέον δὲ θάτερον ἀποφαίνου περὶ αὐτῶν. Εἰ γὰρ τὰ ἀποπίπτοντα ἔργα τῆς αὐτοφανοῦς δείξεως τοιαῦτά ἐστιν οἷα σὺ λέγεις ἀλαζονικά καὶ ψευδῆ, τὰ τῶν ἀληθινῶν ἀθλητῶν περὶ τὸ πῦρ γνήσιά τέ ἐστι καὶ ἀληθι- 10 νά. Ὡςπερ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἀπάντων τὰ ἀρχικά πρῶτως ἀφ' ἐαυτῶν

[91].4 τε re vera VM (tuetur Deubner p. 639) || 7 ἁμάρτημά V: ἁμάρτη μὲν M || 11 αὐτοῖς (οἱ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: αὐτῆς VM || 14 οὐ VM: εὖ cj. i. m. B<sup>4</sup> | τηροῦντα cj. Saffrey: τηροῦντες VM || [92].1 διελέγχεται VM: διελέγονται (ον s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 5 (post ὧν) & add. s. v. et i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: om. VM || 7-8 χαρακτηρίζει fec. V<sup>2</sup>: χαρακτηρίζη VM

which it is possible to attribute to it by means of words. And besides, angels and daemons always receive the truth from the gods so that they never say anything against it, and being perfect each of them according to the same essence, they are able to add nothing more to it by way of boastful advertising.

When, then, does that which you call “deceitful,” that is, misleading self-advertisement, actually happen? When some error occurs in the theurgic technique, and the images in the divine vision are not such as they should be, but others of a different kind are encountered, then inferior kinds, taking on the appearance of more venerable orders, pretend to be that which they assume, and thereupon deliver boastful speeches while claiming more than their actual power.<sup>145</sup> For I think that if the first principle starts on a fraudulent basis, much falsehood flows from the perversion; this situation priests ought to grasp thoroughly, on the basis of the whole order of apparitions (which, when not observed, gives itself away), and to reject their fabricated pretension as in no way belonging to genuine and good spirits. Nor should one bring up errors in evidence in an honest assessment of reality, for neither in the case of other sciences and technologies do we evaluate their accomplishments on the basis of their failures.

Hence, do not proceed to judge what has been performed successfully with difficulty and after innumerable trials, on the basis of ignorant attempts at evocation of the gods,<sup>146</sup> done on the spur of the moment with no proper preparation. Make rather another assessment of them: for if deeds resulting from the spontaneous manifestation are such as you say—boastful and false—those of the genuine athletes of the fire<sup>147</sup> are authentic and true. For, just as in all other cases, the dominant elements start primarily from themselves and provide for themselves whatever

<sup>145</sup> At Eunapius, *Vit. soph.* 473, Iamblichus is credited with exposing as fraudulent a supposed image of Apollo; the spectre was merely that of a deceased gladiator. For a discussion of false visual displays and manipulative magic, see Clarke (2001, 22–24).

<sup>146</sup> “Abamon” uses the term *θεαγωγία* also at VI.1.241.5; cf. Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 5.10.3.1; Gregory of Nazianzus, *Adversus Eunomianos* 10.12 (*Or. Bas.* 27); Theodoret, *Graec. affect. cur.* 3.66.13; *PGM* IV. 956, 976. No other occurrences are attested.

<sup>147</sup> The “athletes of the fire” are the theurgists, but the phrase also recalls Christian descriptions of the martyrs (see Eph 6:13). See Lewy (1978, 195 n. 73).



ἄρχεται, καὶ ἑαυτοῖς παρέχει ὅπερ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἐνδίδωσιν, οἷον ἐν οὐσίᾳ  
ἐν ζωῇ ἐν κινήσει, οὕτω καὶ τὰ τὴν ἀλήθειαν χορηγοῦντα πᾶσι τοῖς οὐ-  
σι περὶ ἑαυτῶν πρῶτως ἀληθεύει, καὶ τὴν ἑαυτῶν οὐσίαν προηγουμένως  
[93] ἀναφαίνει τοῖς θε|ωροῦσι· διόπερ δὴ καὶ τὸ αὐτοπτικὸν πῦρ τοῖς θεουργοῖς 1  
ἐπιδείκνυσιν. Οὐ γὰρ θερμότητος ἔργον ψύχειν, οὐδὲ φωτὸς τὸ ἐπισκοτεῖν  
ἢ ἀποκρύπτειν τι τῶν ὄντων, οὐδ' ἄλλου οὐδενὸς τῶν κατ' οὐσίαν ὅτιοῦν  
διαπραττομένων πάρεστιν ἅμα καὶ ἡ τοῦ ἐναντίου ἔργον δύναμις· ἀλλὰ  
τὰ μὴ φύσιν ἔχοντα καὶ τὰ ἐναντία τοῖς κατ' οὐσίαν ὑπάρχουσιν, ταῦτα 5  
ἐπιδέχεσθαι τὰ ἐναντία δύναται ἢ τῷ κακῷ περιπίπτειν πέφυκεν.

Ταῦτά τοίνυν καὶ περὶ τῶν φαντασμάτων ἐροῦμεν. Εἰ γὰρ ταῦτα  
αὐτὰ μὲν οὐκ ἔστι τἀληθῆ, τοιαῦτα δ' ἕτερα οἰάπερ ὑπάρχει τὰ ὄντα,  
οὐκ ἔστι δῆπου ἐν τοῖς αὐτοφανέσι πνεύμασι, φαντάζεται δ' εἶναι τοιαῦτα  
οἰάπερ αὐτὰ ἀληθῆ· μετέχει δὲ καὶ ταῦτα τοῦ ψεύδους καὶ τῆς ἀπάτης, 10  
ὥσπερ τὰ ἐν τοῖς εἰδώλοις φαινόμενα εἶδη τοιαῦτά ἐστι· καὶ οὕτω διακέ-  
νως ἔλκει τὴν διάνοιαν περὶ ἧ οὐδ' ὅτιοῦν τῶν κρειττόνων ἔσται γενῶν, ἐν  
δὲ ταῖς ἀπατηλαῖς ἔσται καὶ αὐτὰ παρατροπαῖς· τὸ γὰρ μίμημα τοῦ ὄντος  
καὶ τὸ ἀμυδρῶς εἰκαζόμενον καὶ τὸ ἀπάτης αἴτιον γιγνόμενον οὐδενὶ τῶν  
[94] ἀληθινῶν καὶ ἐναργῶς | ὄντων γενῶν προσήκει· ἀλλ' αὐτὰς μὲν οἱ θεοὶ 1  
καὶ οἱ τοῖς θεοῖς ἐπόμενοι τὰς ἀληθινὰς ἑαυτῶν εἰκόνας ἀποκαλύπτουσιν,  
φαντάσματα δ' αὐτῶν οἷα τὰ ἐν ὕδασι ἢ ἐν κατόπτροις μεμνηχανημένα  
οὐδαμῶς προτείνουσιν. Τίνος γὰρ ἂν καὶ ἕνεκα ταῦτα ἐπιδείξειαν; πότε-  
ρον ἔνδειγμα φέροντα τῆς ἑαυτῶν οὐσίας καὶ δυνάμεως; ἀλλὰ ταῦτά γε 5  
τοῦ παντὸς ἐνδεῖ, πλάνης γὰρ καὶ ἀπάτης αἷτια γίγνεται τοῖς πιστεύου-  
σι καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθινῆς γνώσεως τῶν θεῶν ἀποσπᾶν τοὺς θεωροῦντας.  
Ἄλλ' ἵνα τι χρήσιμον παράσχη τοῖς ἐποπτεύουσιν αὐτά; καὶ τί ἂν ποτε  
γένοιτο ἀπὸ τοῦ ψεύδους ὠφέλιμον; ἀλλ' εἰ μὴ τοῦτο, φύσιν ἔχει τὸ θεῖον

[93].9 ἔστι M: ἔσται V | δῆπου M et (δῆ s. v. et δῆπου i. m.) V<sup>2</sup>: ὅπου  
(ut. vid.) V || [94].2 ἀποκαλύπτουσιν (iv s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: ἀποκαλύπτουσα VM || 7  
ἀποσπᾶν VM: ἀποσπᾶ (v p. n.) V<sup>2</sup>

they give to others, for example, existence, life, movement; so, in the case of those providing the truth to all beings, they are first of all true in themselves, and reveal at the outset their own being to those who contemplate them; hence, they show in particular performers of the sacramental rites the fire in a direct vision of divinity. For it is not heat's function to cool, nor light's function to obscure or hide any existing thing, nor is it the function of anything else that achieves a result to exhibit simultaneously the power of achieving an opposite effect. But it is things not in accord with nature, and in essence contrary to their essence, that are able to receive opposite qualities, or fall into evil.

We shall now say the same things also about apparitions. For if they themselves are not true, but are such as to resemble other things which are true, they do not, I presume, derive from the self-revealing spirits, but only appear to be such as those which are themselves real. These latter, indeed, share in falsehood and deception, just like shapes appearing in mirrors; and so they deceptively drag the understanding down to things of which not one relates to the superior kinds of being, but will belong to the realm of the deceptive and aberrant; for the imitation of reality, and that which is represented obscurely and becomes the cause of deception, is not fitting for any of the real and existing classes of being. The gods, however, and those following the gods, reveal the true images of themselves, and do not in any way offer apparitions of themselves such as those contrived in water or in mirrors.<sup>148</sup> For what reason should they exhibit such apparitions? As presenting a token of their own reality and power? But these phantasms are entirely lacking in that, for they are the cause of error and deception for those who trust in them, and wrench those contemplating them away from a true knowledge of the gods.<sup>149</sup> But would they do this as providing something useful for those beholding them? And what that is useful could arise from this falsehood? If this is not the reason, then is the divine of such a nature as to put

<sup>148</sup> For the use of mirrors for magical purposes, see Hopfner (1922, 205–6 n. 39).

<sup>149</sup> Cf. Plato, *Resp.* 509d–e, where Plato's Socrates devalues all forms of shadows and reflections as inferior to their originals, which in turn are a mere reflection of their intelligible paradigm, and *Resp.* 596e where he likens art merely to the action of a mirror. Also note *Tim.* 70e on εἰδωλα and φαντάσματα as reflections on the smooth surface of the liver. See also Plot. *Enn.* 1.6.8.9ff.

φαντάσματα προτείνειν ἄφ' ἑαυτοῦ; καὶ πότε ἂν τὸ μόνιμον καὶ ἰδρυμένον 10  
 ἐν ἑαυτῷ γένος καὶ τὸ τῆς οὐσίας καὶ ἀληθείας αἷτιον εἰς ἀλλοτριάν ἐδραν  
 μίμημα ἂν τι ἄφ' ἑαυτοῦ ἀπατηλὸν ἐμποιήσειεν; οὐδαμῶς ἄρα θεὸς οὔτε  
 αὐτὸς ἑαυτὸν μεταβάλλει εἰς τὰ φαντάσματα, οὔτε ἄφ' ἑαυτοῦ ταῦτα ἐν  
 ἄλλοις προτείνει, τὰ δ' ἀληθῆ ἐν τοῖς ἀληθέσιν ἦθρεσι τῶν ψυχῶν ἐλλάμ-  
 πει· κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ δὲ καὶ οἱ τῶν θεῶν συνοπαδοὶ ζηλῶται τῆς τῶν θεῶν 15  
 εἰσιν αὐτοπτικῆς ἀληθείας.

[95] | Ὁ δὲ νῦν λέγεις, ὥς κοινόν ἐστι <τὸ> τῆς εἰδωλοποιίας καὶ τῆς 1  
 περιαντολογίας θεῶν καὶ δαιμόνων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων, συμφύρει πάντα τὰ  
 τῶν κρειττόνων γένη ἐν ἀλλήλοις, καὶ οὐδ' ἡντινοῦν αὐτῶν ἀπολείπει δια-  
 φορὰν πρὸς ἄλληλα· ἔσται γὰρ αὐτοῖς οὕτω κοινὰ πάντα, καὶ οὐδὲν τοῖς  
 ὑπερέχουσιν ἀποδοθήσεται ἐξαίρετον. Ἐνεστι δ' οὖν καὶ δικαιότερον πρὸς 5  
 σὲ ἀντιλέγειν· τί δὴ οὖν ἔσται κρεῖττον τὸ τῶν θεῶν γένος παρὰ τὸ τῶν  
 δαιμόνων; ἀλλ' οὔτ' ἔχει κοινότητα ταῦτα τὰ γένη, οὔτε φανταστικὴ ἐσ-  
 τιν αὕτη, οὔτε ἀπὸ τῶν τελευταίων καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἐσχάτοις πταισμάτων τὰ  
 πρῶτα καὶ ἐν τοῖς πρώτοις ἀληθῆ ἀποτυπώματα ἀναλογίζεσθαι προσή-  
 κει. Οὕτως ἂν τις καὶ περὶ τούτων δοξάζων τυγχάνοι τοῦ προσήκοντος 10  
 καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς κεχαρισμένον.

11 Τὰ δ' ἐφεξῆς ἐν οἷς τὴν περὶ τούτων ἄγνοιαν καὶ ἀπάτην, ἀν-  
 οσιουργίαν καὶ ἀκαθαρσίαν νερόμικας, προτρέπεις τε ἡμᾶς ἐπὶ τὴν ἀληθῆ  
 [96] περὶ αὐτῶν παραδόσιν, ἔχει | μὲν οὐδεμίαν ἀμφισβήτησιν, ἀλλ' ὁμολο- 1  
 γεῖται παρὰ πᾶσιν ὡσαύτως. Τίς γὰρ οὐκ ἂν συγχωρήσειεν ἐπιστήμην  
 τυγχάνουσαν τοῦ ὄντος οἰκειοτάτην εἶναι [τῆς θείας αἰτίας] θεοῖς, τὴν  
 δ' ἄγνοιαν τὴν ὑποφερομένην εἰς τὸ μὴ ὄν πορρωτάτω τῆς θείας αἰτίας  
 τῶν ἀληθῶν εἰδῶν ἀποπίπτειν; Ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ οὐχ ἰκανῶς εἴρηται, προσθήσω 5  
 τὸ ἐλλείπον· καὶ διότι φιλοσόφως μᾶλλον καὶ λογικῶς ἀλλ' οὐχὶ κατὰ τὴν

[95].1 τὸ add. cj. Gale || 5 ἔνεστι M: ἔνεσται V || 6 παρὰ ] περὶ  
 VM || 12 ἀπάτην i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: ἀγάτην VM || [96].2 παρὰ M: περὶ V || 3  
 τῆς θείας αἰτίας del. cf. Saffrey (cj. 4) | θεοῖς ] θεῶν cj. Gale

forward phantasms? And under what circumstances should their class of being, that is permanent, established in itself, and cause of essence and of truth, implant in an alien setting a deceptive imitation of itself? In no way, surely, does a god either change itself into phantasms or project these from itself into other beings, but it radiates its true forms in the true ways of souls. By the same token, those also who accompany the gods<sup>150</sup> are emulators of the gods' self-revelatory truth. But what you now claim, that there is a common link between the formation of images and bragging among the gods, daemons and others, confuses all the kinds of superior beings with one another and allows no difference of one to the other. For thus everything will be common to all of them and no special characteristic will be conceded to those superior. It is open to me to make the more just reply to your query, "in what way, then, will the race of gods be better than those of daemons?" For these classes have nothing in common; it is neither the skill of producing appearances that links them, nor is it fitting to extrapolate from the last and lowest deviations the primary and true impressions important for primary beings. It is if one holds such opinions as this about these matters, that one will hit upon what is appropriate and pleasing to the divine beings.

**11** Your next remarks, in which you express the view that ignorance and deception about these matters contribute to impiety and impurity, and in which you exhort us toward true traditional teaching, admit of no dispute, but may be agreed on alike by all. For who would not agree that knowledge which alights upon being is most appropriate to the gods, whereas ignorance which declines towards non-being falls very far from the divine cause of true forms.<sup>151</sup> But since it has not been stated with sufficient accuracy, I will add to what is lacking, and because [this suggestion] makes a defence philosophically and logically rather

<sup>150</sup> Socrates argues in the *Republic* that a god would be least likely to have many shapes (ὁ θεὸς γε καὶ τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ πάντα ἄριστα ἔχει, *Resp.* 381b4) and that the so-called conjuring up of the gods is nothing but sorcery; see *Resp.* 380d1-7. Cf. *Phaedr.* 248c.

<sup>151</sup> This presumably refers to the One or to the henadic realm in general.

ἐνεργὸν τῶν ἱερέων τέχνην τὸν ἀπολογισμὸν ποιεῖται, διὰ τοῦτο οἶμαι δεῖν  
θεουργικώτερον εἰπεῖν τι περὶ αὐτῶν.

Ἔστω μὲν γὰρ ἡ ἄγνοια καὶ ἀπάτη πλημμέλεια καὶ ἀσέβεια, οὐ  
μὴν διὰ τοῦτο ψευδῇ ποιεῖ καὶ τὰ οἰκείως τοῖς θεοῖς προσφερόμενα καὶ 10  
τὰ θεῖα ἔργα, οὐδὲ γὰρ ἡ ἔννοια συνάπτει τοῖς θεοῖς τοὺς θεουργοὺς· ἐπεὶ  
τί ἐκώλυνε τοὺς θεωρητικῶς φιλοσοφοῦντας ἔχειν τὴν θεουργικὴν ἔνωσιν  
πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς; νῦν δ' οὐκ ἔχει τό γε ἀληθὲς οὕτως· ἀλλ' ἡ τῶν ἔργων  
τῶν ἀρρήτων καὶ ὑπὲρ πάσαν νόησιν θεοπρεπῶς ἐνεργουμένων τελεσιουρ-  
[97] γία ἢ τε τῶν νοουμένων τοῖς θεοῖς μόνον συμβόλων ἀφθέγκτων δύ[ναμις 1  
ἐντίθησι τὴν θεουργικὴν ἔνωσιν. Διόπερ οὐδὲ τῷ νοεῖν αὐτὰ ἐνεργοῦμεν·  
ἔσται γὰρ οὕτω νοερά αὐτῶν ἡ ἐνέργεια καὶ ἀφ' ἡμῶν ἐνδιδομένη· τὸ δ'  
οὐδέτερόν ἐστιν ἀληθές. Καὶ γὰρ μὴ νοούντων ἡμῶν αὐτὰ τὰ συνθήματα  
ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν δρᾷ τὸ οἰκεῖον ἔργον, καὶ ἡ τῶν θεῶν, πρὸς οὓς ἀνήκει ταῦ- 5  
τα, ἄρρητος δύναμις αὐτῇ ἀφ' ἑαυτῆς ἐπιγινώσκει τὰς οἰκείας εἰκόνας,  
ἀλλ' οὐ τῷ διεγείρεσθαι ὑπὸ τῆς ἡμετέρας νοήσεως· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἔχει φύ-  
σιν τὰ περιέχοντα ὑπὸ τῶν περιεχομένων οὐδὲ τὰ τέλεια ὑπὸ τῶν ἀτελῶν  
οὐδ' ὑπὸ τῶν μερῶν τὰ ὅλα ἀνακινεῖσθαι. Ὅθεν δὴ οὐδ' ὑπὸ τῶν ἡμε-  
τέρων νοήσεων προηγουμένως τὰ θεῖα αἴτια προκαλεῖται εἰς ἐνέργειαν· 10  
ἀλλὰ ταύτας μὲν καὶ τὰς ὅλας τῆς ψυχῆς ἀρίστας διαθέσεις καὶ τὴν περὶ  
ἡμᾶς καθαρότητα ὡς συναίτια ἅττα προὑποκείσθαι χρή, τὰ δ' ὡς κυρίως  
ἐγείροντα τὴν θεῖαν βούλησιν αὐτὰ τὰ θεῖα ἐστὶ συνθήματα· καὶ οὕτω τὰ  
τῶν θεῶν αὐτὰ ὑφ' ἑαυτῶν ἀνακινεῖται, ὑπ' οὐδενὸς τῶν ὑποδεεστέρων  
ἐνδεχόμενά τινα εἰς ἑαυτὰ ἀρχὴν τῆς οἰκείας ἐνεργείας. 15

[98] | Ταῦτα δὴ τοῦδε ἕνεκα ἀπεμήκυνα, ὅπως μὴ νομίζης ἀφ' ἡμῶν εἶ- 1  
ναι τὸ πᾶν κῦρος τῆς ἐν ταῖς θεουργίαις ἐνεργείας, μηδ' ἐν ταῖς ἐννοίαις  
ταῖς ἡμετέραις ἀληθῶς διακειμέναις ὑπολάβης καὶ τὸ ἀληθὲς αὐτῶν ἔρ-  
γον κατορθοῦσθαι, μηδ' ἐν τῇ ἀπάτῃ διαφεύδεσθαι. Οὐδὲ γὰρ εἰς γινώμεν  
τὰ ἐκάστω γένει παρακολονθοῦντα ἴδια, ἥδη καὶ τετυχήκαμεν αὐτῶν τῆς 5  
ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων ἀληθείας. Ἀλλ' οὐκ ἄνευ τοῦ γινῶναι παραγίγνεται  
ποτε ἡ δραστικὴ ἔνωσις, οὐ μὴν ἔχει γε πρὸς αὐτὴν ταυτότητα· ὥστε

[96].15 ἀφθέγκτων VM: ἀφθέγκτως cj. Rasche (p. 18, n. 1) || [97].8 τὰ  
τέλεια cj. C et i. m. B<sup>5</sup>: ἀτέλεια VM || 13 βούλησιν (βου i. r.) V<sup>2</sup>: ...λησιν V  
(lac. 5 ll.) θέλησιν M | συνθήματα VM: συνθήματα fec. V<sup>2</sup> || [98].3 ὑπολάβης  
V: ὑπὸ λῶβης M || 5 γένει cj. Gale: γένῃ VM

than in accord with the effective skill of priests, I think it necessary to say something more on the theurgic level concerning them.<sup>152</sup>

Granting, then, that ignorance and deception are faulty and impious, it does not follow on this that the offerings made to the gods and divine works are invalid, for it is not pure thought that unites theurgists to the gods. Indeed what, then, would hinder those who are theoretical philosophers from enjoying a theurgic union with the gods? But the situation is not so: it is the accomplishment of acts not to be divulged and beyond all conception, and the power of the unutterable symbols, understood solely by the gods, which establishes theurgic union. Hence, we do not bring about these things by intellection alone; for thus their efficacy would be intellectual, and dependent upon us. But neither assumption is true. For even when we are not engaged in intellection, the symbols themselves, by themselves, perform their appropriate work, and the ineffable power of the gods, to whom these symbols relate, itself recognises the proper images of itself, not through being aroused by our thought. For it is not in the nature of things containing to be aroused by those contained in them, nor of things perfect by things imperfect, nor even of wholes by parts. Hence it is not even chiefly through our intellection that divine causes are called into actuality; but it is necessary for these and all the best conditions of the soul and our ritual purity to pre-exist as auxiliary causes; but the things which properly arouse the divine will are the actual divine symbols. And so the attention of the gods is awakened by themselves, receiving from no inferior being any principle for themselves of their characteristic activity.

I have laboured this point at some length for this reason: that you not believe that all authority over activity in the theurgic rites depends on us, or suppose that their genuine performance is assured by the true condition of our acts of thinking, or that they are made false by our deception. For not even if we know the particular traits that accompany each kind have we then hit upon the truth in regard to the performance of sacred rites. Effective union certainly never takes place without knowledge, but

<sup>152</sup> A reference to his original division of subject-matter into philosophy, theology and theurgy in I.2.

οὐδ' ἡ καθαρότης ἡ θεία διὰ τῆς ὀρθῆς γνώσεως, ὥσπερ ἡ τοῦ σώματος διὰ τῆς ἀγνείας, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦ γιγνώσκειν μᾶλλον ὑπερῆνεται αὕτη καὶ ἀποκεκάθαρται. Οὐδ' ἄλλο τοίνυν οὐδὲν τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν τοιοῦτον ὑπάρχον, 10 ὅποια τὰ ἀνθρώπινα, συνεργεῖ τι πρὸς τὸ τέλος τῶν θείων πράξεων.

Δέχου δὴ καὶ τοῦτο ἐν παρέργῳ μὲν εἰρημένον, πρὸς ὅλην δὲ τὴν ἐπίνοιαν τὴν σὴν περὶ τῆς θεουργικῆς τέχνης ἱκανῶς ἐνιστάμενον. Τῆς δ' [99] αὐτῆς ἔχεται τούτοις | δυνάμεως ἀσκεῖν ἐν οἷς ὅσιον καὶ ὠφέλιμον εἶναι 1 νερόμικας τὴν περὶ θεῶν ἐπιστήμην, καὶ τὸ μὲν τῆς ἀγνοίας τῆς περὶ τῶν τιμίων καὶ καλῶν σκότος καλεῖς, φῶς δὲ τὸ τῆς γνώσεως· καὶ τὸ μὲν ἐμπληῆσαι τίθεσαι πάντων κακῶν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους δι' ἀμαθίαν καὶ τόλμαν, τὸ δ' αἴτιον ἡγῇ πάντων ἀγαθῶν. Καὶ γὰρ πάντα πρὸς ταῦτό τείνει τοῖς 5 ἔμπροσθεν εἰρημένοις, τετύχηκέ τε λόγον τοῦ προσήκοντος μετ' ἐκείνων. Δεῖ τοίνυν ταῦτα μὲν παραλιπεῖν, ἐπὶ δὲ τὰς περὶ τῆς μαντικῆς ζητήσεις μετελθεῖν, καὶ ταύτας διαλῦσαι συντόμως.

[98].8 ὥσπερ VM: ὥσπερ οὐδὲ cj. Gale || 9 ἀγνείας VM: ὑγείας (ὑγ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> ἀγνοίας cj. F || 14 ἔχεται ] ἔπεται cj. s. v. W<sup>2</sup> || [99].4 πάντων cj. Gale: περὶ τῶν VM || 7 τῆς V: om. M

nevertheless it is not identical with it. Thus, divine purity does not come about through right knowledge, in the way that bodily purity does through chastity, but divine union and purification actually go beyond knowledge. Nothing, then, of any such qualities in us, such as are humans contributes in any way towards the accomplishment of divine transactions.

Allow me to contribute this as an afterthought, but one that will refute sufficiently your entire conception of the theurgic technique. What you are asserting here has the same force as that in which you declared that scientific understanding about the gods is a holy and useful thing, and you called ignorance of things honourable and lovely "darkness," but the knowledge of them "light." You consider the one to have filled human beings with all ills, because of their ignorance and audacity, but the other to be the cause of all goods. All these statements tend in the same direction as those mentioned previously, and together with them, they have received proper consideration. We may, therefore, leave these topics, and pass on to questions concerning divination, and resolve them concisely.



## III

1 *Πρῶτον τοίνυν ἀπαιτεῖς διαρθρωθῆναι σοι τί τὸ γιγνόμενόν*  
*ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ τοῦ μέλλοντος προγνώσει. Εὐθὺς οὖν ὁ ἐπιχειρεῖς μαθεῖν ἐσ-* 10  
 [100] *τιν ἀδύνατον. Οἷοι γὰρ δὴ | εἶναι κατὰ τὸν νοῦν τῆς ἐρωτήσεως τοιοῦτόν* 1  
*τι τὸ τῆς προγνώσεως οἷον γίγνεσθαι, καὶ τι ἐκ τῶν ἐν τῇ φύσει κειμένων*  
*ὑπάρχειν. Τὸ δ' οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τῶν ἐν τῷ γίγνεσθαι, οὐδ' οἷον φυσικὴ τις*  
*ἀπεργάζεται μεταβολή, οὐδέ τι τέχνασμα ἐξεύρηται τοῦτο ὡς εἰς τὴν τοῦ*  
*βίου κατασκευὴν χρήσιμον μεμηχανημένον, οὐδ' ὅλως ἀνθρωπικόν ἐστι* 5  
*τὸ ἔργον, θεῖον δὲ καὶ ὑπερφυεὲς ἄνωθέν τε ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καταπεμπό-*  
*μενον, ἀγέννητόν τε καὶ ἀίδιον αὐτοφυνῶς προηγείται.*

*Μέγιστον δὴ οὖν ἀλεξιφάρμακον πρὸς ἅπαντα τὰ τοιαῦτα ἀπορή-*  
*ματα ἐκείνῳ ἐστὶ, γινῶναι τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς μαντικῆς, ὡς οὔτε ἀπὸ σωμάτων*  
*ἐστὶν ὁρμωμένη οὔτε ἀπὸ τῶν περὶ τοῖς σώμασι παθημάτων, οὔτε ἀπὸ* 10  
*φύσεώς τινος καὶ τῶν περὶ τὴν φύσιν δυνάμεων, οὔτε ἀπὸ τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης*  
*παρασκευῆς ἢ τῶν περὶ αὐτὴν ἕξεων, ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἀπὸ τέχνης τινὸς ἕξωθεν*  
*ἐπικτήτον περὶ τι μέρος τῶν ἐν τῷ βίῳ διαπραγματευομένης· τὸ δὲ πᾶν*  
*κῦρος αὐτῆς ἀνήκει εἰς τοὺς θεοὺς καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν θεῶν ἐνδίδοται, θείοις*  
 [101] *τε ἔργοις ἢ σημείοις ἐπιτελεῖται, θεάματά τε | ἔχει θεῖα καὶ θεωρήματα* 1  
*ἐπιστημονικά. Τὰ δ' ἄλλα πάντα ὡς ὄργανα ὑπόκειται τῇ ἐκ θεῶν κατα-*  
*πεμπομένη τῆς προγνώσεως δόσει, ὅσα τε περὶ τὴν ψυχὴν ἡμῶν ἐστὶ καὶ*  
*τὸ σῶμα καὶ ὅσα ἐν τῇ φύσει τοῦ παντός ἢ ταῖς ἰδίαις ἐκάστων φύσεσιν*  
*ἐνυπάρχει· ἔνια δὲ ὡς ἐν ὕλης τάξει προϋπόκειται, ὅσα τόπων ἢ ἄλλων* 5  
*τινῶν ἔχεται τοιούτων.*

*Εἰ δὴ τις ἀφόμενος τῶν πρωτουργῶν αἰτίων ἐπὶ τὰς δευτερουργοὺς*  
*ὑπουργίας ἀποφέρει τὸ τῆς μαντικῆς, οἷον κινήσεις σωμάτων ἢ παθῶν με-*  
*ταβολὰς ἢ γενέσεις τινὰς ἐτέρας ἢ ζωῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ἐνεργείας ἢ λόγους*  
*ἐμψύχους ἢ φυσικοὺς τιθέμενος, νομίζοι τι σαφὲς λέγειν, ἢ συμμετρίας* 10

## BOOK III

1 First of all, then, you request a clear description of “what happens in predicting the future.” For a start, however, what you are trying to learn is quite impossible. For, according to the gist of your question, you believe something like this about foreknowledge: “that it can come into being,” and is among “the things existing in nature.” But it is not one of the things coming into existence, and it does not even behave like a natural change, neither is it like an artefact invented for use in daily life, nor is it, generally speaking, an human achievement at all. But it is a thing divine, supernatural, sent from heaven above; both unbegotten and eternal, it takes priority by its own nature.

The greatest talisman,<sup>153</sup> then, against all such difficulties is this: to know the principle of divination, to know that it is activated neither by bodies nor by bodily conditions, neither by a natural object nor by natural powers, neither by human disposition nor its related habits. It is not even set in motion by a skill acquired from without, one concerned exclusively with some aspect of human existence. Rather, all of its supreme power belongs to the gods, and is bestowed by the gods. Divination is accomplished by divine acts and signs, and consists of divine visions and scientific insights. All else is subordinate, instrumental to the gift of foreknowledge sent down by the gods: everything that concerns our soul, our body, everything that is inherent in the nature of the universe, and in the particular constitution of each thing. Some elements are, however, pre-established as matter, those that belong to physical places, or to other such things.

If someone, then, straying from the primary causes, downgrades the skill of divination to secondary operations—position, for example, bodily movements or changes of emotions, or other happenings, either activities of human life or other psychic or physical explanations—he might believe that he says something obvious. Or, if he defends as causes the proportions of these

<sup>153</sup> “Antidote” is another possible translation of ἀλεξιφάρμακον: cf. Plato, *Leg.* 12.957d.

τούτων πρὸς ἄλληλα ὡς αἰτίας ἀπολογιζόμενος ὑπολαμβάνει τὴν ἀκρίβειαν ἀποδιδόναι περὶ αὐτῆς, τοῦ παντός διημάρτηκεν. Ἄλλ' εἰς ὅρος ὁρθός καὶ μία ἀρχὴ περὶ πάντων τοιούτων, μηδαμῶς ἀναιτίως παράγειν τὴν τοῦ μέλλοντος μαντείαν ἀπὸ τῶν μηδεμίαν ἐχόντων πρόγνωσιν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν θεῶν τῶν συνεχόντων ἐν | αὐτοῖς τὰ πέρατα τῆς ὅλης 1 εἰδήσεως τῶν ὄντων, ἀπὸ τούτων θεωρεῖν μεριζομένην τὴν μαντικὴν περὶ πάντα τὸν κόσμον καὶ περὶ πάσας τὰς ἐν αὐτῷ διηρημένας φύσεις. Ἡ γὰρ τοιάδε ἀρχηγικὴ τέ ἐστιν αἰτία καὶ διαφερόντως κοινοτάτη, ἔχουσα τε ἐν ἑαυτῇ πρῶτως ἃ δίδωσι τοῖς μετέχουσιν ἑαυτῆς, καὶ μάλιστα ἀλή- 5 θειαν παρεχομένη ἣς δεῖ τῇ μαντικῇ, οὐσίαν τε καὶ αἰτίαν τῶν γιγνομένων προειληφύα, ἀφ' ὧν ἐξ ἀνάγκης ἐφίκει τὸ τυγχάνειν τῆς προγνώσεως ἀψεύστως. Ἀρχὴ μὲν οὖν ἡμῶν ἔστω ἡ τοιαύτη κοινῶς περὶ πάσης τῆς μαντικῆς, ἀφ' ἣς ἔνεστι καὶ τὰ εἶδη πάντα αὐτῆς ἐπιστημονικῶς ἐξευρεῖν· ἥδη δ' αὐτῶν ἀντιλαμβανόμεθα ἐπόμενοι τοῖς ὑπὸ σοῦ προτεινομένοις 10 ἐρωτήμασιν.

2 Περὶ δὲ τῆς καθ' ὕπνον μαντικῆς λέγει ταῦτα· ὅτι δὴ καθεύδοντες δι' ὀνείρων τοῖς μέλλουσι πολλάκις ἐπιβάλλομεν οὐκ ἐν ἐκστάσει 1 [103] μὲν γιγνόμενοι πολυκινήτω (ἥσυχον γὰρ κεῖται τὸ σῶμα), αὐτοῖς μέντοι γε ὡς ὕπαρ οὐκέτι παρακολουθοῦντες. Ταῦτα τοίνυν ἃ λέγεις συμβαίνειν εἰωθεν ἐπὶ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων ὀνείρων καὶ τῶν ἀπὸ ψυχῆς, ἢ τῶν ἐν ἡμῶν ἐννοιῶν ἢ λόγων ἀνακινουμένων, ἢ ὅσα ἀπὸ φαντασιῶν ἐγείρεται ἢ τινων μεθημερινῶν φροντίδων· ἃ τότε μὲν ἐστὶν ἀληθῆ· τότε δὲ ψευδῆ, καὶ ἐπὶ 5 τινων μὲν τυγχάνει τοῦ ὄντος, ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν πολλῶν ἀποτυγχάνει. Οὐ μὴν οἱ γε θεόπεμπτοι καλούμενοι ὄνειροι τοῦτον γίνονται τὸν τρόπον ὅνπερ σὺ λέγεις· ἀλλ' ἦτοι τοῦ ὕπνου ἀπολιπόντος, ἀρχομένων ἄρτι ἐγρηγορέναι,

[101].11 ἀπολογιζόμενος VM: ἀναλογιζόμενος cj. Gale | ὑπολαμβάνει M et (ut vid.) V: ὑπολαμβάνει V<sup>2</sup> || 13 τοιούτων V: om. M || [102].1 αὐτοῖς scripsi: αὐτοῖς VM ἑαυτοῖς cj. Gale || 3 τὰς N: τοὺς M || 8 ἀψεύστως scripsi: ἀπαύστως VM ἀπταίστως cj. Gale || 12 δὴ<sup>1</sup> M: δὲ V | λέγει VM: λέγεις (σ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> | δὴ<sup>2</sup> V: δεῖ M || [103].4 ἐννοιῶν M: εὐνοιῶν V

things to one another, he has wholly erred in supposing that he has given an accurate account of divination. There is one correct rule and one first principle concerning all these matters: that is, never to derive divination of the future from those things that have no foreknowledge as such, but to derive it from the gods who in themselves possess the limits of all knowledge of existing things, from whom the mantic power is distributed throughout the whole cosmos, and among all the different natures found there. For such a principal cause is not only primordial and eminently universal, but contains primarily in itself whatever it gives to those sharing in it, and especially furnishes the truth which divination needs. It comprehends in advance both the essence and cause of things about to happen, and from these, by necessity, the attainment of foreknowledge truly occurs.

Let such, then, be our general principle about the whole of divination from which it is even possible to discover all its forms scientifically. But, pursuing the questions you have asked, let us now take these matters in turn.

2 Your letter speaks<sup>154</sup> about divination in sleep: “When asleep, we often encounter, by means of dreams, things in the future; although we are no longer in an agitated ecstasy (for the body remains at rest), we certainly are no longer conscious of things as when in a wakeful state.” These things, then, which you mention, are likely to happen in human dreams, and in things coming from the soul, either from thoughts or words stirred up in us, or in such things as arise from our fantasies, or from everyday concerns of some kind. Sometimes these things are true, sometimes false; and in some cases, they chance upon reality but, in many cases, they fail to attain reality. Dreams called “god-sent” do not, however, arise in the way you describe.<sup>155</sup> On the contrary, either when sleep departs, just as we are awakening, it is possible

<sup>154</sup> See our note to I.12 on the use of the third person.

<sup>155</sup> A differentiation between divine dreams and those originating in the imagination can be traced back as far as Homer, *Od.* 19.560–567, echoed at Virgil, *Aen.* 6.893–896. For dream-classification and the difference between false and true dream-visions, see Hippocrates, *De ratione victus in morbis acutis* (or *On Regimen*) and Galen’s commentary on that work; also Artemidorus, *Onirocritica*; Macrobius, *In somnium Scipionis*; Augustine, *Gen. imp.* 12.18.39; 12.23.49. See further Clarke (2001, 81–83); Oberhelman (1991, 31–35); Dodds (1951, 106–8).

ἀκούειν πάρεστί τινος φωνῆς συντόμου περὶ τῶν πρακτέων ὑφηγουμένης,  
 ἢ μεταξὺ τοῦ ἐγρηγορέναι καὶ καθεύδειν ὄντων ἢ καὶ παντελῶς ἐγρηγο- 10  
 ρότων αἱ φωναὶ ἀκούονται. Καὶ ποτὲ μὲν ἀναφές καὶ ἀσώματον πνεῦμα  
 περιέχει κύκλῳ τοὺς κατακειμένους, ὥς ὄρασιν μὲν αὐτοῦ μὴ παρῆναι,  
 [104] τὴν δ' ἄλλην συναίσθησιν καὶ παρακολούθησιν ὑπάρχειν, ᾧ|ζομένου τε ἐν 1  
 τῷ εἰσιέναι καὶ περικεχυμένου πανταχόθεν ἄνευ τινὸς ἐπαφῆς, θαυμαστά  
 τε ἔργα ἀπεργαζομένου πρὸς ἀπαλλαγὴν παθῶν ψυχῆς τε καὶ σώματος.  
 Ἄλλοτε δὲ φωτὸς ἐπιλάμπαντος λαμπροῦ καὶ ἡρεμαῖον κατέχεται μὲν ἡ  
 τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν ὄψις καὶ συμμύει τε, ἀναπεπταμένη οὕσα πρότερον· αἱ δ' 5  
 ἄλλαι αἰσθήσεις διεγρηγερόμεναι τυγχάνουσι, καὶ συναισθάνονται πῶς εἰς  
 τὸ φῶς οἱ θεοὶ ἐκφαίνονται, ὅσα τε λέγουσιν ἀκούουσι καὶ ὅσα δρῶσιν ἴσ-  
 ασι παρακολουθοῦσαι. Τελειότερον δ' ἔτι τοῦδε θεωρεῖται, ἡνίκα ἄν καὶ  
 ἡ ὄψις βλέπη καὶ ὁ νοῦς ἐρρωμένος ἐπακολουθῇ τοῖς δρωμένοις, κίνησίς  
 τε τῶν θεωρούντων συνυπάρχη. 10

Ταῦτα δὴ ὅν τοςαῦτα ὄντα καὶ οὕτω διάφορα οὐδενὶ τῶν ἀνθρωπί-  
 νων προσέοικεν· ἀλλ' ὅ τε ὕπνος καὶ ἡ κατοχὴ τῶν ὀμμάτων καὶ ἡ κάρω  
 προσεμφερῆς κατάληψις καὶ ἡ μεταξὺ τοῦ ὕπνου τε καὶ τῆς ἐγρηγόρσεως  
 κατάστασις καὶ ἡ ἄρτι ἀνεγειρομένη ἢ ἡ παντελὴς ἐγρηγόρσις πάντα θεῖά  
 [105] ἔστι | καὶ πρὸς ὑποδοχὴν τῶν θεῶν ἐπιτήδεια, ἀπ' αὐτῶν τε ἐπιπέμπεται 1  
 τῶν θεῶν, μέρος τε τῆς θείας ἐπιφανείας καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα προηγείται.

[103].9 περὶ V: τῆς M || 11 ἀναφές VM: ἀφανές cj. Gale ἀναφανές cj.  
 A || [104].3 ἀπεργαζομένου fec. V<sup>2</sup>: ἀπεργαζομένης VM || 5 τε VM (tuetur  
 Deubner p. 639): an τι? || 12 προσέοικεν M: προσέτηκεν V || [105].1 τῶν  
 M: om. V | ἐπιπέμπεται M: ἐπιπέμπτεται V || 2 τὰ VM: κατὰ cj. B

to hear a sudden voice<sup>156</sup> guiding us about things to be done, or the voices are heard between waking and going to sleep,<sup>157</sup> or even when wholly awake. And sometimes an intangible and incorporeal spirit encircles those lying down, so that there is no visual perception of it, but some other awareness and self-consciousness. When entering, it makes a whooshing sound,<sup>158</sup> and diffuses itself in all directions without any contact, and it does wondrous works by way of freeing both soul and body from their sufferings. At other times, however, when a light shines brightly and peacefully, not only is the sight of the eye possessed, but closed up after previously being quite open.<sup>159</sup> And the other senses are awake and consciously aware of how the gods shine forth in the light, and with a clear understanding they both hear what they say, and know what they do. This is observed even more fully when the sight is active and also the mind, with full vigour, understands the things done, and there is a response at the same time in those observing.

These dreams, then, being numerous and quite different, do not resemble anything human. But dream-sleep<sup>160</sup> and possession of the eyes, a seizure similar to a blackout, a state between sleep and wakefulness, and presently a stirring or complete wakefulness, all of these are divine and fit for reception of the gods, and they are sent by the gods themselves, and such things precede it, a part of the divine epiphany.

<sup>156</sup> Perhaps an allusion to Plato, *Phaedr.* 242c1–2, where Socrates reports that he seemed “suddenly to hear a certain voice” (τινὰ φωνήν ἔδοξα αὐτόθιν ἀκοῦσαι).

<sup>157</sup> This semi-conscious state between sleeping and waking, during which hallucinations are common, has been identified by twentieth-century psychologists as the “hypnagogic” state. See Oswald (1962) and Empson (1989).

<sup>158</sup> Given that ῥοῦζος meant, literally, a “whistling” or a “rushing” sound, it is interesting that hypnagogic experiences are frequently accompanied by a “crashing” or a “rushing” sound, often described as the feeling of falling off a cliff; see Oswald (1962, 90). For more on ῥοῦζος, see III.9 and note ad loc.

<sup>159</sup> Cf. perhaps II.8 on the intolerability of the divine visions.

<sup>160</sup> ὕπνος as opposed to καθεύδειν. “Abamon” prefers the former term, presumably because it was already imbued with divine significance; Porphyry fails to understand the difference.

Ἄνελε οὖν ἐκ τῶν θείων ὀνείρων, ἐν οἷς δὴ καὶ μάλιστα ἐστὶ τὸ  
μαντικόν, τὸ καθεύδειν ὅπως οὖν καὶ τὸ μὴ παρακολουθεῖν ὡς ὕπαρ τοῖς  
ἐπιφαινομένοις. Οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδὲ οἶον τέ ἐστι τὴν ἐναργῆ παρουσίαν τῶν 5  
θεῶν τῆς ὕπαρ ἐγγιγνομένης παρακολουθήσεως ἀπολείπεσθαι· ἀλλ' εἰ  
χρὴ τάληθές εἰπεῖν, καὶ σαφεστέραν αὐτὴν εἶναι ἀνάγκη καὶ ἀκριβεστέ-  
ραν ἐκείνης καὶ σύνεσιν ἐμποιοῦσαν τελειοτέραν. Ἄ δὴ μὴ γινώσκοντές  
τινες δειγμάτων τῶν ὄντων μαντικῶν ὀνείρων, κοινὸν δέ τινα τρόπον ἐπ'  
αὐτῶν ἀνθρώπινον ἐπινοοῦντες, παραπίπτουσι κατὰ συντυχίαν σπανιάκις 10  
ἐπ' αὐτῶν τῇ τοῦ μέλλοντος προγνώσει, καὶ ἐντεῦθεν εἰκότως ἀποροῦσι  
πῶς συνέχουσιν οἱ ὄνειροι τὸ ἀληθές. Ὁ δὴ καὶ σὲ θράττειν μοι δοκεῖ, διὰ  
τὸ μὴ εἰδέναι τὰ ἀληθινὰ αὐτῶν γνωρίσματα. Ἀλλὰ δεῖ στοιχεῖα ταῦτα  
[106] προστησάμενόν σε τῆς ἀληθινῆς τῶν ὀνείρων ἐπιγνώσεως | ἀκολουθησά 1  
τοῖς ὅλοις περὶ τῆς καθ' ὕπνον μαντικῆς λόγους.

**3** Λέγουσι δὲ τάδε· τῆς ψυχῆς διττὴν ἐχούσης ζωὴν, τὴν μὲν σὺν  
τῷ σώματι τὴν δὲ χωριστὴν παντὸς σώματος, περὶ μὲν τὸν ἄλλον βίον  
ἐργηγορότες τὰ πολλὰ τῇ κοινῇ μετὰ τοῦ σώματος ζωῇ χρώμεθα, πλὴν 5  
εἴ ποὺ κατὰ τὸ νοεῖν καὶ διανοεῖσθαι τοῖς καθαροῖς λόγοις ἀφιστάμεθα ἀπ'  
αὐτοῦ παντάπασιν· ἐν δὲ δὴ τῷ καθεύδειν ἀπολυόμεθα παντελῶς ὥσπερ  
ἀπὸ τινων παρακειμένων ἡμῖν δεσμῶν, καὶ τῇ κεχωρισμένῃ τῆς γνώσεως  
ζωῇ χρώμεθα. Τότε δὴ οὖν, εἴτε νοερὸν εἴτε θεῖον ταῦτόν ὑπάρχον εἴτε 10  
καὶ ἐν ἐκάτερον ἰδίᾳ καθ' ἑαυτὸ ὄν, τὸ τῆς ζωῆς εἶδος ἀνεγείρεται ἐν ἡμῖν  
καὶ ἐνεργεῖ ἢ πέφυκεν. Ἐπειδὴ οὖν ὁ μὲν νοῦς τὰ ὄντα θεωρεῖ, λόγους δ'  
ἢ ψυχὴ τῶν γιγνομένων ἐν αὐτῇ πάντων περιέχει, εἰκότως δὴ κατὰ τὴν  
περιέχουσαν αἰτίαν τασσόμενα ἐν τοῖς προηγουμένοις αὐτῶν λόγοις προ-  
γινώσκει τὰ μέλλοντα. Καὶ ταύτης δ' ἔτι τελειοτέραν ποιεῖται μαντείαν,

[105].3 ἐκ τῶν M: αὐτῶν V || 8 ἐμποιοῦσαν (v s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: ἐμποιοῦσα  
VM ἐμποιεῖν cj. Gale || 9 ὄντων VM: ὄντως (alt. v. eraso, σ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 12  
θράττειν V: θράττει M πράττειν cj. Boulliau i. m. U et B<sup>3</sup> || [106].8 γνώσεως  
VM: γενέσεως (pr. ω p. n., ene s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 10 ἐκάτερον ἰδίᾳ V: ἰδίᾳ ἐκάτερον  
M || 12 αὐτῇ scripsi: αὐτῇ codd.

Remove, then, from divine dreams in which divination especially occurs, “sleep”<sup>161</sup> in whatever form, and “the inability to be conscious of those things which appear in a wakeful state.” For it is surely impossible that the gods’ clear presence could be inferior to that of wakeful consciousness. And if we are to speak the truth, the divine presence must be even more clear and distinct than that, and produce a more perfect understanding. But some, who do not recognise the indications of truly divinatory dreams, and think that they share something in common with those that are human, occasionally and by accident encounter those revealing some foreknowledge of the future, and hence they are reasonably in doubt about how dreams contain the truth. Indeed, I think that you are troubled because you do not know their genuine characteristics. But you must apply yourself to these fundamentals of a true knowledge of dreams, and follow the full arguments about divination in sleep.

3 [The thinkers to whom we refer] say the following: that the soul has a double life, the one with the body, the other apart from all body.<sup>162</sup> When we are awake, in respect of the other life, we use mostly the life in common with the body—except, perhaps, when thinking or engaging in pure thoughts, we detach ourselves wholly from the body. And in sleep we are completely freed, as it were, from chains confining us, and we engage in the life detached from generation.<sup>163</sup> At this time, then, this form of life, whether it is intellectual or divine, which is the same thing, or each one separately, it is aroused in us, and energises according to its own nature. Since the intellect, then, contemplates real beings, and the soul encompasses the principles of everything coming into existence, it is reasonable that it should know beforehand future things arranged according to their predominant principles, and the first cause which encompasses them. And it produces

<sup>161</sup> Porphyry’s term, which “Abamon” dislikes.

<sup>162</sup> Cf. IV.2.184; also V.15; *De an.* ap. Stobaeus 1:368.3-4. “Abamon” agrees that the soul has a double life, but demolishes the common view that divination in sleep was possible simply because the soul was liberated from the body during sleep. It is this general opinion that Porphyry states and that “Abamon” quotes at III.3.106. (See *Abst.* 4.9.7 for Porphyry presenting this view again.)

<sup>163</sup> Des Places retains γώσεως, but Ficino’s γενέσεως makes better sense given the context. Cf. Sicherl (1957, 173).



- [107] | ἥνικα ἂν τοῖς ὅλοις, ἀφ' ὧν ἀπεμερίσθη, συνάπτη τὰς μοίρας τῆς ζωῆς 1  
καὶ τῆς νοερᾶς ἐνεργείας· πληροῦται γὰρ ἀπὸ τῶν ὅλων τότε τῆς πάσης  
εἰδήσεως, ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον ἐξικνεῖσθαι ταῖς ἐννοίαις τῶν περὶ τὸν κό-  
σμον ἐπιτελουμένων. Οὐ μὴν ἀλλ' ὁπόταν γε καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς ἐνωθῇ κατὰ  
τὴν τοιαύτην ἀπόλυτον ἐνέργειαν, αὐτὰ τὰ ἀληθέστατα δέχεται τηνικαῦτα 5  
πληρώματα τῶν νοήσεων, ἀφ' ὧν ἀληθῆ μαντεῖαν προβάλλει· <καὶ> τῶν  
θείων ὀνείρων ἐντεῦθεν τὰς γνησιωτάτας ἀρχὰς καταβάλλεται. Ἀλλ' ἐὰν  
μὲν τὸ νοερὸν ἑαυτῆς ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ τὸ θεῖον συνυφαίνῃ τοῖς κρείττοσι, τότε  
καὶ τὰ φαντάσματα αὐτῆς ἔσται καθαρώτερα, ἥτοι περὶ θεῶν ἢ τῶν καθ'  
ἑαντὰς ἀσωμάτων οὐσιῶν, ἢ ὡς ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν περὶ τῶν εἰς ἀλήθειαν συμ- 10  
βαλλομένων τὴν περὶ τῶν νοητῶν. Ἐὰν δὲ τοὺς λόγους τῶν γιγνομένων  
ἀνάγῃ πρὸς τοὺς αἰτίους αὐτῶν θεούς, δύναμιν ἀπ' αὐτῶν προσλαμβάνει  
καὶ γινώσιν ἀναλογιζομένην ὅσα τε ἦν καὶ ὅσα ἔσται, θεωρίαν τε παντὸς  
[108] χρόνου ποιεῖται καὶ τῶν ἐν τῷ χρόνῳ συμβαινόντων ἐπισκο|πεῖ τὰ ἔργα, 1  
τάξιν τε αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπιμέλειαν καὶ ἐπανόρθωσιν τὴν προσήκουσαν μετα-  
λαγχάνει· καὶ τὰ μὲν κεκμηκότα σώματα θεραπεύει, τὰ δὲ πλημμελῶς καὶ  
ἀτάκτως ἔχοντα παρ' ἀνθρώποις εὖ διατίθησι, τεχνῶν τε εὐρέσεις πολ-  
λάκις καὶ διανομὰς τῶν δικαίων καὶ τῶν νομίμων θέσεις παραδίδωσιν. 5

Οὕτως ἐν Ἀσκληπιοῦ μὲν τὰ νοσήματα τοῖς θεοῖς ὀνείροις παύε-  
ται· διὰ δὲ τὴν τάξιν τῶν νύκτωρ ἐπιφανειῶν ἡ ἱατρικὴ τέχνη συνέστη ἀπὸ  
τῶν ἱερῶν ὀνειράτων. Τὸ δ' Ἀλεξάνδρου στρατόπεδον πᾶν ἐσώθη, μέλλον  
ἄρδην νυκτὸς ἀπόλλυσθαι, Διονύσου κατ' ὄναρ ἐπιφανέντος καὶ τὴν λύ- 10  
σιν τῶν ἀνηκέστων παθημάτων σημήναντος. Ἄφουτις δὲ ὑπὸ Λυσάνδρου  
τοῦ βασιλέως πολιορκουμένη κατὰ τοὺς ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἄμμωνος πεμφθέντας  
ὀνείρους ἐσώθη, τὴν ταχίστην αὐτοῦ τὸν στρατὸν ἀναστήσαντος ἐκείθεν

[107].3 ἐννοίαις M et (v s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: ἐνοίαις V || 6 καὶ add. cj. Saffrey  
|| 8 συνυφαίνῃ M: συνηφαίνῃ V || 12 ἀνάγῃ cj. Gale: ἀνάγκῃ VM |  
προσλαμβάνει cj. Gale: προσλαμβάνειν VM

an even more perfect divination, surely, when it unites its apportioned lots of life and intellectual activity to the universals from which it had been separated. For it is then filled from the universals of total knowledge, so that, for the most part, it arrives at conceptions of what goes on in the cosmos. Nevertheless, whenever it is united to the gods through such a liberated activity, it receives, in this case, the truest plenitudes of intellections, from which it produces true divination; and hence it yields quite genuine principles of divine dreams. But if the soul weaves together its intellectual and its divine part with higher powers,<sup>164</sup> then its own visions will be purer, whether of the gods, or of essentially incorporeal beings, or, generally speaking, of whatever contributes to the truth about intelligible things. If, however, it refers accounts of things happening to their causes, that is, to the gods, it receives from them a power and knowledge embracing things that were and will be, and takes a view of all time, and surveys events happening in time, and it participates in their order, care, and appropriate improvement. Further, it heals sick bodies, and re-arranges many things that were discordant and disorderly<sup>165</sup> among human beings, and also it often transmits the discoveries of human skills, legal regulations, and the establishment of customs.

So, in Asclepius's sanctuaries, diseases are arrested by divine dreams,<sup>166</sup> and, because of the structure of nocturnal apparitions, the medical art has arisen from sacred dreams. Alexander's entire army was saved, though facing total destruction in the night, when Dionysos appeared in a dream, and this god indicated the mode of deliverance from incurable sufferings.<sup>167</sup> Aphutis was also saved during King Lysander's siege, through dreams sent by Ammon, for Lysander withdrew his troops as quickly as possible,

<sup>164</sup> τὸ νοερόν and τὸ θεῖον are perhaps distinct parts of the soul, with the latter being the "One" in the soul.

<sup>165</sup> A phrase borrowed from Plato's *Timaeus* 30a4–5.

<sup>166</sup> A reference to the popular healing process of incubation, where the sufferer would spend the night in the temple of Asclepius or some other healing god, in the hope of a miraculous cure or a dream revealing an instruction that would lead to recovery.

<sup>167</sup> Strabo 15.2.7 reports that Alexander's army suffered from poisonous snakes and the poisoned arrows of the hostile inhabitants of the Oreites. In a dream, Alexander was supposedly shown the root of a plant to be placed on the wounds of his men; the barbarians, seeing the healing effects, supposedly surrendered to his army. Alexander's links with Dionysos are well-known (see

[109] καὶ λύσαντος εὐθέως τὴν πολιορκίαν. Καὶ τί δεῖ καθ' ἑκαστον ἐπεξιόν- 1  
τι μὴνύειν, τῶν καθ' ἡμέραν ἀεὶ συμπιπτόντων κρείττονα τοῦ λόγου τὴν  
ἐνέργειαν παρεχομένων;

4 Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ἐξαρκεῖ εἰρησθαι περὶ τῆς καθ' ὕπνον θείας μαν-  
τικῆς, τίς τέ ἐστι καὶ πῶς γίνεται καὶ ὅσον παρέχεται τοῖς ἀνθρώποις 5  
τὸ ὄφελος· φηὶς δὲ δὴ ὥς ἐπιβάλλουσι καὶ δι' ἐνθουσιασμοῦ καὶ θεοφο-  
ρίας πολλοὶ τῷ μέλλοντι, ἐργηγορότες μὲν, ὥς ἐνεργεῖν καὶ κατ' αἴσθησιν,  
αὐτοῖς δὲ πάλιν οὐ παρακολουθοῦντες ἢ οὔτι γε ὥς πρότερον παρακολου-  
θοῦντες ἑαυτοῖς. Βούλομαι δὴ καὶ ἐν τούτοις τὰ τεκμήρια τῶν ὀρθῶς  
κατεχομένων ὑπὸ τῶν θεῶν παραδείξαι· εἰ γὰρ τὴν ἑαυτῶν ζωὴν ὅποτε 10  
θείκασιν ὀλην ὥς ὄχημα ἢ ὄργανον τοῖς ἐπιπνέουσι θεοῖς, ἢ μεταλλάτ-  
τουσιν ἀντὶ τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ζωῆς τὴν θείαν, ἢ καὶ ἐνεργοῦσι τὴν οἰκείαν  
ζωὴν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, οὔτε κατ' αἴσθησιν ἐνεργοῦσιν οὔτε ἐργηγόρασιν οὔ-  
τως ὥς οἱ διεγгерγόμενας ἔχοντες τὰς αἰσθήσεις, οὔτ' ἐπιβάλλουσιν αὐτοὶ  
τῷ μέλλοντι, οὔτε κινεῖνται ὥς οἱ καθ' ὁρμὴν ἐνεργοῦντες· ἀλλ' οὐδὲ παρ- 15  
[110] ακολουθοῦσιν ἑαυτοῖς οὔτε ὥς πρότερον | οὔτε ἄλλως ὅπως οὖν, οὐδ' ὅλως 1  
ἐπιστρέφουσιν εἰς ἑαυτοὺς τὴν οἰκείαν σύνεσιν, οὐδ' ἔστιν ἡντινα ἰδίαν  
γνώσιν προβάλλουσιν.

Τεκμήριον δὲ μέγιστον· πολλοὶ γὰρ καὶ πυρὸς προσφερομένου οὐ  
καίονται, οὐχ ἄπτομένου τοῦ πυρὸς αὐτῶν διὰ τὴν θείαν ἐπίπνοιαν· πολ- 5  
λοὶ δὲ καιόμενοι οὐκ ἀντιλαμβάνονται, διότι οὐ τὴν τοῦ ζώου ζωὴν ζῶσι  
τηνικαῦτα. Καὶ οἱ μὲν διαπεύραντες ὀβελούς οὐκ ἐπαισθάνονται, οἱ δὲ  
πελέκεις προσαράσαντες τοῖς νότοις· οἱ δὲ καὶ ξιφιδίους τὰς ὠλένας κατ-  
ατέμνοντες οὐδαμῶς παρακολουθοῦσιν. Αἱ τε ἐνέργειαι αὐτῶν οὐδαμῶς 10  
εἰσιν ἀνθρώπιναι· τὰ τε γὰρ ἄβατα βατὰ γίνεται θεοφορούμενα, καὶ εἰς

[109].3 ἐνέργειαν cj. Westerink: ἐνέργειαν codd. || 4 ὕπνον M: ὕπνου  
V || 8 αὐτοῖς V: αὐτοῖς M || 10 εἰ VM: ἢ cj. Gale || 13 οὔτε<sup>2</sup> V: οὔτω  
M || [110].8 προσαράσαντες] προσαράσαντες VM προσαρράσαντες (alt. p s.  
v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 10 θεοφορούμενα VM: θεοφορουμένοις cj. Gale

and immediately ended the siege.<sup>168</sup> But why go through such occurrences one by one, when daily events offer a clarity greater than any story?

4 So let these things said about divine divination in sleep be sufficient: what it is, how it happens, and how much benefit it provides for human beings. But you go on to say that “many apprehend the future by divine inspiration and divine transport in a waking state, so as to operate according to sensation, but yet they do not have consciousness of themselves, or at any rate they are no longer conscious of themselves as they were before.” In this area also, I want to make clear the characteristic signs of those who are truly possessed by the gods. For if they have subjected their entire life as a vehicle or instrument to the gods who inspire them, either they exchange their human life for the divine, or they direct their own life towards the god; they neither act according to sensation, nor are they awake in the manner of those who have their senses aroused; neither do they themselves apprehend the future, nor are they moved like those who act according to purpose. But they are not even conscious of themselves, neither as they were before, nor in any other fashion, nor, in general, do they turn their personal intelligence upon themselves, nor do they project any personal knowledge.

Here is the greatest evidence: for many, even when fire is applied to them, are not burned, since the fire does not touch them on account of their divine inspiration. And many who are burned do not react, because at this time they are not living the life of an animate being. And some who are pierced with spits have no awareness of it, nor do others who are struck on the back with axes; still others whose arms are cut with knives do not feel it at all.<sup>169</sup> Their actions are in no way human, because what is inaccessible becomes accessible under divine possession: they cast

Arrian, *Anab.* 6.14.2; 28.2; Plutarch, *Alex.* 47.1-6; Curtius, *Hist. Alex.* 9.10.24-28), and he was believed to have been the recipient of numerous divine dreams (see Plutarch, *Alex.* 24.6-9; 32.1-2; 41.6; 50.6).

<sup>168</sup> Aphutis is on the Thracian peninsula of Pallene. That a dream sent by Ammon caused Lysander to abandon his siege of this city is recorded at Plutarch, *Lys.* 20.4-6, although Plutarch chooses to emphasise the opinion that Lysander made up the story in order to justify his own actions.

<sup>169</sup> For miraculous or ecstatic anaesthesia, see Ovid, *Trist.* 4.1.41-44; Seneca, *Tro.* 682; Tibullus, *Eleg.* 1.6.45; Clearchus, frg. 6; 7 Wehrli. See further Clarke (2001, 76-78).

πῦρ φέρονται καὶ πῦρ διαπορεύονται καὶ ποταμοὺς διαπερῶσιν, ὥσπερ ἡ ἐν Κασταβάλλοις ἰέρεια. Ἀπὸ δὲ τούτων δέικνυται ὡς οὐ παρακολου-  
 θοῦσιν ἑαυτοῖς ἐνθουσιῶντες, καὶ ὅτι οὔτε τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην οὔτε τὴν τοῦ  
 [111] ζῶον ζώην ζῶσι, κατ' αἰσθησιν ἢ ὁρμὴν, ἄλλην δὲ τινα θειοτέραν ζώην | 1  
 ἀνταλλάσσονται, ἀφ' ἧς ἐπιπνέονται καὶ ἀφ' ἧς τελέως κατέχονται.

5 Ἔστι δὴ οὖν πολλὰ τῆς θείας κατοκωχῆς εἶδη καὶ πολλαχῶς  
 ἡ θεία ἐπίπνοια ἀνακινεῖται, ὅθεν δὴ καὶ πολλὰ τὰ σημεῖα αὐτῆς ἐστι  
 καὶ διαφέροντα. Τοῦτο μὲν γὰρ οἱ θεοὶ διαφέροντες, ἀφ' ὧν ἐπιπνεόμεθα, 5  
 καὶ τὴν ἐπίπνοιαν ποιοῦσιν ἑτέραν, τοῦτο καὶ ὁ τρόπος τῶν ἐνθουσιασμῶν  
 παραλλάττων ποιεῖ καὶ τὴν θεοφορίαν ἑτέραν. Ἡ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ἡμᾶς ἔχει,  
 ἢ ἡμεῖς ὅλοι τοῦ θεοῦ γιγνώμεθα, ἢ κοινὴν ποιούμεθα πρὸς αὐτὸν τὴν  
 ἐνέργειαν· καὶ ποτὲ μὲν τῆς ἐσχάτης δυνάμεως τοῦ θεοῦ μετέχομεν, πο-  
 τὲ δ' αὖ τῆς μέσης, ἐνίοτε δὲ τῆς πρώτης· καὶ ποτὲ μὲν μετουσία ψιλὴ 10  
 γίγνεται, ποτὲ δὲ καὶ κοινωνία, ἐνίοτε δὲ καὶ ἔνωσις τούτων τῶν ἐνθου-  
 σιάσεων· ἢ μόνη ἢ ψυχὴ ἀπολαύει, ἢ καὶ τῷ σώματι συμμετέχει, ἢ καὶ  
 τὸ κοινὸν ζῶον.

Ἐκ δὴ τούτων καὶ τὰ σημεῖα τῶν ἐπιπνεομένων γίνονται πολυειδῆ,  
 [112] κίνησίς τε τοῦ σώματος καὶ μορίων | τινῶν, παντελεῖς τε αὐτοῦ ἡρεμίαι, 1  
 τάξεις τε ἐναρμόνιοι καὶ χορεῖαι καὶ φωναὶ ἐμμελεῖς ἢ τὰναντία τούτων·  
 καὶ ἥτοι τὸ σῶμα ἐπαιρούμενον ὁρᾶται ἢ διογκούμενον ἢ μετέωρον ἐν τῷ  
 ἀέρι φερόμενον ἢ τὰναντία τούτων περὶ αὐτὸ φαίνεται γιγνώμενα· φω-  
 νῆς τε ὁμαλότης κατὰ μέγεθος ἢ τὰ μεταξὺ διαλαμβανόμενα τῇ σιωπῇ 5

[110].12 ἢ V: οἱ M | κασταβάλλοις M: καταβάλλοις V || [111].3 εἶδη  
 s. v. V<sup>2</sup>: om. VM || 5 καὶ VM: om. cj. B || 6 καὶ<sup>1</sup> M: om V || 8 ἢ<sup>1</sup> VM:  
 καὶ cj. Gale || 10 μετουσία VM: παρουσία cj. Ficinus Gale || 15 κίνησίς  
 VM: κινήσεις cj. B || [112].4 γιγνώμενα cj. Parthey: γιγνώμενον VM || 5 ἢ  
 VM: ἢ κατὰ cj. Gale

themselves into fire and they walk through fire, and they walk over rivers like the priestess at Kastabala.<sup>170</sup> From these examples it is clear that those who are inspired have no consciousness of themselves, and they lead neither the life of a human being nor of a living animal so far as concerns sensation or appetite, but they exchange their life for another more divine life, by which they are inspired, and by which they are completely possessed.

5 There are, therefore, many kinds of divine possession, and divine inspiration is aroused in many ways. Hence, there are indeed many different signs of it. For, on the one hand, the gods by whom we are inspired are different and produce diverse inspiration; on the other hand, the manner of inspiration in its alterations makes the divine possession also different.<sup>171</sup> For either the god possesses us, or we become wholly the god's property, or we exercise our activity in common with him. And sometimes we share in the god's lowest power, sometimes in his intermediate, and sometimes in his primary power. And sometimes there is a mere participation, sometimes a communion, and sometimes even a union; from these inspirations,<sup>172</sup> either the soul alone benefits, or it shares also with the body, or even, again, it is the composite living being that benefits.

As a result of these diversities, the characteristics of those inspired are also of many kinds: the movement both of the body and some of its parts, its total repose, harmonious positions and dances, tuneful utterances, or the opposites of these; and the body is either seen to be lifted up, or distended, borne aloft in the air,<sup>173</sup> or the opposites of these appear to happen to it. A great evenness in the voice's extent and in the intervals that distinguish

<sup>170</sup> Strabo 12.2.7 reports that in Kastabala there was a temple of Artemis Perasia ("the one crossing over") where the priestess walked on glowing coals, not across water.

<sup>171</sup> Cf. Plato, *Ion* 536c: Socrates, arguing that Ion is inspired solely by Homer, makes an analogy with the Korybantes: "in the same way, the Korybantes heed only one tune, that of the god by whom they are possessed, whoever he may be, and they are ready with postures and lyrics appropriate to that tune, deaf to all others." See Clarke (2001, 79–80).

<sup>172</sup> We suggest reading a break after ἐνωσις and before τούτων τῶν ἐνθουσιάζσεων (rather than after the latter as in Des Places); this makes better sense in terms of word-order as well as meaning.

<sup>173</sup> Eunapius, *Vit. soph.* 457–459 reports the rumour among Iamblichus's followers that while he prayed his body used to float ten cubits into the

διαστήματα πολλή θεωρεῖται, καὶ ἀνωμαλία αὐθις, ἐνίοτε μὲν μουσικῶς ἐπιτετινομένων καὶ ἀνιεμένων τῶν ἤχων, ἐνίοτε δ' ἄλλον τρόπον.

6 Τὸ δὲ μέγιστον ὁράται τῷ θεαγωγῶντι τὸ κατιὸν πνεῦμα καὶ εἰσκρινόμενον, ὅσον τέ ἐστι καὶ ὁποῖον· μυστικῶς τε πεῖθεται καὶ διακυβερονᾶται. Ὅραται δὲ καὶ τῷ δεχομένῳ τὸ τοῦ πυρὸς εἶδος πρὸ τοῦ 10 δέχεσθαι· ἐνίοτε δὲ καὶ τοῖς θεωροῦσι πᾶσιν ἔκδηλον γίνεταί, ἥτοι κατιόντος ἢ ἀναχωροῦντος τοῦ θεοῦ· ἀφ' οὗ δὴ καὶ τὸ ἀληθέστατον αὐτοῦ καὶ δυνατώτατον καὶ μάλιστα τεταγμένον περὶ τίνων τε πέφυκεν ἀληθεύειν καὶ τίνα δύνανται παρέχειν ἢ ἐπιτελεῖν τοῖς ἐπιστήμοσι γνώριμον 1 γίνεταί. Οἱ | δ' ἄνευ τῶν μακαρίων τούτων θεαμάτων ἀφανῶς ποιούμενοι τὰς ἀγωγὰς τῶν πνευμάτων ὥσπερ ἐν σκότῳ ἀφάσσουσι καὶ οὐδὲν ἴσασι ὧν ποιοῦσι, πλὴν πάνυ σμικρῶν τῶν διὰ τοῦ σώματος φαινομένων σημείων τοῦ ἐνθουσιῶντος καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν ἐναργῶς ὁρωμένων, τὰ ὅλα τῆς θείας ἐπιπνοίας ἐν ἀφανεί κεκρυμμένα ἀγνοοῦντες. Ἄλλ' ἐκεῖσε 5 πάλιν ἐπάνειμι. Εἰ γὰρ παρουσία τοῦ τῶν θεῶν πυρὸς καὶ φωτός τι εἶδος ἄρρητον ἔξωθεν ἐπιβαίνει τῷ κατεχομένῳ, πληροῖ τε αὐτὸν ὅλον ἐπὶ κράτει, κύκλῳ τε πανταχόθεν ἐν ἑαυτῷ συνείληφεν, ὥς μηδεμίαν οἰκείαν ἐνέργειαν δύνασθαι διαπράττεσθαι, τίς ἂν αἰσθησις ἢ παρακολούθησις ἢ ἐπιβολὴ οἰκεία παραγένοιτο τῷ καταδεχομένῳ τὸ θεῖον πῦρ; ἢ τί ἂν τότε 10 ἀνθρώπινον κίνημα παρεμπέσοι, ἢ ποία καταδοχὴ γένοιτ' ἂν ἀνθρωπίνῃ πάθους ἢ ἐκστάσεως ἢ παρατροπῆς φαντασιῶν ἢ ἄλλου τινὸς τοιούτου, ὁποῖον ὑπολαμβάνουσιν οἱ πολλοί; τοιαῦτα δὴ οὐκ ἔστω καὶ τὰ θεῖα τεκμήρια τῆς ἀληθινῆς | ἐνθουσιᾶσεως, οἷς ἂν τις προσέχων οὐκ ἂν διαμάρτοι 1 τῆς ὁρθῆς περὶ αὐτὴν ἐπιγνώσεως.

[112].11 ἥτοι VM: εἴ τι cj. B || 13-14 περὶ τίνων et καὶ τίνα scr. Parthey: περὶ τινων et καὶ τίνα VM || [113].7-8 ἐπὶ κράτει scripsi: ἐπικρατεῖ VM καὶ ἐπικρατεῖ (καὶ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 11 παρεμπέσοι V: παρεμπέση M | ἂν M: om. V

it from silence is also observed or, alternatively, an unevenness, when sometimes the sounds tense and relax musically, and sometimes in another way.

6 But it is most important that the spirit<sup>174</sup> descending and entering is seen by the medium, both in its extent and its quality; and that he is mystically obedient to and directed by it. The form of fire is seen by the recipient before the reception; and sometimes it even becomes conspicuous to all the spectators, during either the descent or the withdrawal of the god.<sup>175</sup> Hence, it becomes clear to those who are in the know that it is in itself most true, most powerful, and especially well ordered concerning things about which it is naturally disposed to speak the truth, and what power it provides or effects. But those who conjure up the spirits secretly, without these blessed visions, grope, as it were, in darkness, and know nothing of what they do, except for some very small signs which appear in the body of the one divinely inspired, and some other signs that manifest themselves clearly; but they are ignorant of the whole of divine inspiration, which is hidden in obscurity. But I return once more to my topic. For if the presence of the gods' fire and an ineffable form of light from without invades the person possessed, these fill him completely with their power, and encompass him in a circle on all sides, so that he is not able to exercise any activity of his own; what sensation or consciousness or appropriate intuition would come to the one receiving the divine fire? Or what human motion would then find its way in, or what human reception of passion or ecstasy would arise, what perversion of the imagination, or anything else of such kind as the multitude suppose to take place? Let things such as these, then, be the divine signs of genuine possession, and anyone who heeds them will not stray from the right discernment of it.

air and turn a magnificent golden hue. Cf. a striking parallel at *PGM* IV. 530-541.

<sup>174</sup> The mention of visible *πνεῦμα* led Dodds (1951, 299) to link this description with that of the (largely Victorian) notion of ectoplasm, the manifestation of spirits in a visible form produced spontaneously from the body of a medium in a trance. However, such manifestations more often took the form of physical objects (easily faked through sleight of hand) rather than luminous visions, despite what the makers of films on the occult would have us believe.

<sup>175</sup> Cf. Book II and notes ad loc. on luminous revelation, and note also the repeated assertion that the soundest visions are seen by all; cf. III.2.104 above.



7 Οὐ μὴν ἐξαρκεῖ γε ταῦτα μόνα μαθεῖν, οὐδ' ἂν τις γένοιτο τέλειος εἰς τὴν θείαν ἐπιστήμην ταῦτα μόνα εἰδώς. Ἀλλὰ χρὴ γινῶναι καὶ τίς ὁ ἐνθουσιασμός ἐστι καὶ ὅπως γίγνεται. Φορὰ μὲν οὖν τῆς διανοίας 5 μετὰ δαιμονίας ἐπιπνοίας ψευδῶς δοξάζεται. Οὔτε γὰρ ἡ διάνοια ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη φέρεται, εἴ γε ὄντως κατέχεται, οὔτε δαιμόνων, θεῶν δὲ γίγνεται ἐπίπνοια. Ἀλλ' οὐδ' ἔκστασις ἀπλῶς οὕτως ἐστίν, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τὸ κρεῖττον ἀναγωγὴ καὶ μετástασις, ἡ δὲ παραφορὰ καὶ ἔκστασις ἐμφαίνει καὶ τὴν ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον ἀνατροπὴν. Ἔτι τοίνυν ὁ τοῦτο ἀποφαινόμενος λέγει μὲν τι περὶ 10 τῶν συμβεβηκότων περὶ τοὺς ἐνθουσιῶντας, οὐ μέντοι τὸ προηγούμενον ἀναδιδάσκει. Ἔστι δὲ τοῦτο τὸ κατέχεσθαι ὅλους αὐτοὺς ὑπὸ τοῦ θείου, ᾧ ἐπακολουθεῖ ὕστερον καὶ τὸ ἐξίστασθαι. Ψυχῆς μὲν οὖν καὶ τιнос τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ δυνάμεων, ἡ νοῦ καὶ τιнос τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ δυνάμεων ἡ ἐνεργειῶν, [115] ἡ σωματικῆς ἀσθενείας ἡ ἀνευ ταύτης οὐκ ἂν τις ὑπολάβοι δικαίως τὸν 1 ἐνθουσιασμόν εἶναι, οὐδ' ἂν οὕτω γίγνεσθαι εἰκότως ἂν ὑπόθοιτο· οὔτε γὰρ ἀνθρωπινόν ἐστι τὸ τῆς θεοφορίας ἔργον, οὔτε ἀνθρωπίνους μορίους ἡ ἐνεργήμασι τὸ πᾶν ἔχει κῦρος· ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν ἄλλως ὑπόκειται, καὶ 5 χρῆται αὐτοῖς ὁ θεὸς ὡς ὄργανοις· τὸ δὲ πᾶν ἔργον τῆς μαντείας δι' αὐτοῦ πληροῖ, καὶ ἀμιγῶς ἀπὸ τῶν ἄλλων ἀφειμένος οὔτε ψυχῆς κινουμένης οὐδ' ὅτιον οὔτε σώματος ἐνεργεῖ καθ' αὐτόν. Ὅθεν δὴ καὶ ἀψευδῶς γίγνονται τὰ μαντεῖα τὰ οὕτως ὡς λέγω κατορθούμενα. Ἐπειδὴ δ' ἡ ψυχὴ προκατάρχη ἢ μεταξὺ κινῆται, ἢ τὸ σῶμά τι παρεμπίπτῃ καὶ τὴν θείαν ἀρμονίαν ἐπιταράττει, θορυβῶδη γίγνονται καὶ ψευδῇ τὰ μαντεῖα, καὶ ὁ 10 ἐνθουσιασμός οὐκέτι ἀληθῆς ὑπάρχει οὐδὲ γνησίως θεῖος.

[114].3 γε V: τε M || 3-4 τέλειος cj. B: τέλος VM || 10 μὲν τι cj. Westerink: μέντοι codd. || 15-[115].1 (ante σωματικῆς) add. cj. μετὰ s. v. V<sup>2</sup>: om. VM || [115].2 ἄν<sup>2</sup> V: οὖν M || 4 ἡ V: καὶ M || 5-6 αὐτοῦ scripsi: αὐτοῦ VM || 7 ἀψευδῶς M et (ut vid.) V: ἀψευδῆ (ἢ i. r., ex ὧς?) V<sup>2</sup> || 9 προκατάρχη VM: προκατατραρχθῆ cj. Boulliau i. m. U et B<sup>3</sup>; an προκαταρχθῆ? | τὸ VM: τῷ cj. B | σῶμά τι VM: σώματι fec. M<sup>2</sup>

7 Nevertheless, it is not sufficient to learn only these things, nor would someone knowing only these things become accomplished in the divine science. But it is also necessary to know what divine possession is, and how it happens. So, then, it is falsely believed to be a transport of the mind by daemonic inspiration. For the human intellect is neither carried away if it is really possessed, nor does inspiration come from daemons, but from the gods.<sup>176</sup> Yet it is not even ecstasy pure and simple, but an exaltation and transference to what is superior, whereas frenzy and ecstasy actually reveal a perversion toward what is inferior.<sup>177</sup> Still more, the one who represents this ecstasy says something about the incidental feature of those who are inspired, but does not put his finger on the main point. That is, they themselves are wholly possessed by the divine, the consequence of which is ecstasy. But one would not rightly suppose that divine possession belongs to the soul or one of its faculties, or to intellect or one of its faculties or activities, or to bodily weakness or its absence. Nor would one reasonably suppose that it would occur in this way, for being transported by a god is neither a human accomplishment, nor does it base its power in human parts (of the body) or activities. But, on the one hand, these are otherwise subordinate, and the god uses them as instruments; on the other hand, the entire activity of divination comes to its fulfilment through the god acting by himself, purely detached from other things, without the soul or body moving in any way. Hence, the divinations being done rightly, as I say, really and truly happen. But when the soul takes the initiative, or is disturbed during the divination, or the body interrupts and perverts the divine harmony, the divinations become turbulent and false, and the possession is no longer true nor genuinely divine.

<sup>176</sup> Asserted at Plato, *Ion* 536c, against the common view that inspiration was solely daemonic; see Eustathius, *Dionys. Perieg.* 809 (Bernhardy 1:256); Dionysios, *Dem.* 22. See Linforth (1946, 123, 125).

<sup>177</sup> "Abamon" is not, *pace* Des Places ad loc., simply opposing inspiration to ecstasy, but rather saying that ecstasy is only a symptom of possession, not proof of its occurrence, and may sometimes occur through human antics. This becomes clearer at III.25.159.1–4 where he explains the difference between ecstasy that is *παρὰ φύσιν* (contrary to nature) and that is *ὑπὲρ φύσιν* (supernatural).

8 *Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἀπόλυσις τοῦ θεοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς ἄλλης ψυχῆς ἢ χω-  
ρισμός τοῦ νοῦ ἢ τις ἐπίτευξις ἦν ἢ ἀληθῆς μαντεία, ἢ σφοδρότης καὶ  
[116] ἐπίτασις ἐνεργείας ἢ πάθους ἢ | ὀξύτης καὶ φορὰ τῆς διανοίας ἢ τὸ δια- 1  
θερμαίνεσθαι τὸν νοῦν, πάντα ἂν τὰ τοιαῦτα, ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμετέρας ψυχῆς  
ἀνακινούμενα, ψυχῆς ἂν τις τὸν ἐνθουσιασμόν εἶναι εὐλόγως ὑπετίθετο.  
Εἰ δὲ τὸ σῶμα κατὰ τὰς ποιὰς κράσεις ἦτοι μελαγχολικὰς ἢ ὀποισσούν,  
ἢ καὶ ἰδίως ἔτι μᾶλλον κατὰ τὸ θερμὸν καὶ ψυχρὸν καὶ ὑγρὸν ἢ τὸ ποιόν 5  
τι τούτων εἶδος, ἢ τὴν ἐν λόγῳ τούτων μῖξιν ἢ κρᾶσιν ἢ τὸ πνεῦμα ἢ τὸ  
μᾶλλον ἢ τὸ ἥττον τούτων, αἴτιον καθίσταται τῆς ἐνθουσιαστικῆς ἐκστά-  
σεως, σωματικὸν ἂν εἴη τὸ τῆς παρατροπῆς πάθος καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν φυσικῶν  
κινήσεων ἐγείρομενον· εἰ δ' ἐξ ἀμφοῖν ἢ ἀρχὴ σώματός τε καὶ ψυχῆς ἀν-  
εγείρεται, καθὸ συμπέπηκται ταῦτα ἀλλήλοις, κοινὸν ἔσται τοῦ ζώου τὸ 10  
τοιόνδε κίνημα· ἀλλ' οὔτε σώματος οὔτε ψυχῆς οὔτε τοῦ συναμφοτέρου  
τὸ ἐνθουσιᾶν ἔστιν ἔργον· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἔχει τινὰ ταῦτα ἐν ἑαυτοῖς αἰτίαν τῆς  
θείας παραλλάξεως, οὐδὲ πέφυκεν ἀπὸ τῶν χειρόνων τὰ κρείττονα ἀπο-  
γενναῖσθαι.*

[117] | Ἀλλὰ δεῖ ζητεῖν τὰ τῆς θείας μανίας αἰτία· ταῦτα δ' ἐστὶ τὰ κα- 1  
θήγοντα ἀπὸ τῶν θεῶν φῶτα καὶ τὰ ἐνδιδόμενα πνεύματα ἀπ' αὐτῶν καὶ  
ἢ ἀπ' αὐτῶν παροῦσα παντελῆς ἐπικράτεια, περιέχουσα μὲν πάντα τὰ ἐν  
ἡμῖν, ἐξορίζουσα δὲ πάντῃ τὴν οἰκείαν ἡμῶν παρακολούθησιν καὶ κίνη-  
σιν, καὶ λόγους μὲν προϊεμένη, οὐ μετὰ διανοίας δὲ τῶν λεγόντων, ἀλλὰ 5  
μαινομένῳ φασὶ στόματι φθεγγομένων αὐτοὺς καὶ ὑπηρετούντων ὅλων  
καὶ παραχωρούντων μόνη τῇ τοῦ κρατοῦντος ἐνεργείᾳ. Τοιοῦτός τις ἐσ-  
τιν ὁ σύμπας ἐνθουσιασμός καὶ ἀπὸ τοιούτων αἰτίων ἀποτελούμενος, ὡς  
ἐν τύπῳ καὶ μὴ δι' ἀκριβείας περὶ αὐτοῦ εἰρησθαι.

[115].13 ἐπίτευξις V: ἐπίταξις MU ἐπίτασις cj. Boulliau i. m. U et Gale |  
ἦν scripsi: ἦ VM | ἦ] ἦ VM || [116].4 μελαγχολικὰς scr. BU: μεταχρονικὰς  
V μεταχρονικὰς M μελαχρονικὰς (λ i. r. e τ) V<sup>2</sup> || 7-8 ἐκστάσεως cj. Gale:  
ἐξετάσεως VM || 10 ἔσται V: ἔσται τὸ M || [117].3 παροῦσα V: om. M ||  
6 μαινομένῳ M: μαινομένων V || 8 τοιούτων M et (οιοῦ ex ού) V<sup>2</sup>: τούτων  
V

8 If, then, true divination were a deliverance of the divine element from the rest of the soul, a separation of the intellect, or some lucky strike, or a vehemence and intensity of an activity, or a passion, a sharpening and a transport of the mind, or a thorough warming of the intellect, all such things being set in motion by our soul, one might reasonably suppose divine possession to be a function of the soul. But if the body, on account of certain temperaments, whether melancholic or of some other kind, or even, in particular, on account of heat, cold, moisture, or some other form of these, or their union or blending in proportion, either of the breath or more or less of these elements,<sup>178</sup> then the corporeal condition would be the cause of the perversion, and it would be awakened by physical movements. But if, however, the source is roused from both body and soul, insofar as they coalesce with one another,<sup>179</sup> such movement will be common to every living being. But divine possession is neither the accomplishment of the body nor of the soul, nor of both together, nor do these contain in themselves some cause of divine alteration, nor is it the nature of the greater to be generated from the inferior.

But it is necessary to investigate the causes of divine madness.<sup>180</sup> These are the illuminations descending from the gods, the spirits given off by them, and the full power from them which both encompasses everything in us, and entirely banishes our own consciousness and movement. The madness sends forth words, but not with the understanding of the speakers; on the contrary, it is said that they utter them with a "frenzied mouth"<sup>181</sup> while wholly serving and surrendering to the unique activity of the one controlling them. Divine possession is brought to perfection by such causes, speaking generally and without precision.

<sup>178</sup> Plutarch explores this range of popular suggestions for oracular inspiration in his discussion *On the Decline of Oracles*. His conclusion seems to be that terrestrial exhalation should be rejected as the sole cause of inspiration (*Def. orac.* 435a–f), but accepted as an auxiliary (*Def. orac.* 436e–f). Cf. also Aristotle, *Mete.* 340b1–37.

<sup>179</sup> Cf. Plato, *Tim.* 71e5.

<sup>180</sup> On divine madness see Plato, *Phaedr.* 244c–245b; cf. 256b6.

<sup>181</sup> Heraclitus, frg. 92 D-K describes the Pythia thus.

9 Ἡ δὲ λέγεις ἐπὶ τούτοις ἐστὶ ταῦτα· ὡς τῶν ἐξισταμένων ἔνιοί 10  
 τινες αὐλῶν ἀκούοντες ἢ κυμβάλων ἢ τυμπάνων ἢ τινος μέλους ἐνθου-  
 σιῶσιν, ὡς οἱ τε κορυβαντιζόμενοι καὶ οἱ τῷ Σαβαζίῳ κάτοχοι καὶ οἱ  
 [118] μητρίζοντες· δεῖ | δὴ καὶ περὶ τούτων τὰς αἰτίας διελθεῖν πῶς τε γίγνον- 1  
 ται, ἐπιτελούμενά τε τίνα ἔχει λόγον.

Τὸ μὲν οὖν κινητικὸν τι καὶ παθητικὸν εἶναι τὴν μουσικὴν, καὶ τὸ  
 τῶν αὐλῶν ἐμποιεῖν ἢ ἱατρεῦειν τὰ πάθη τῆς παρατροπῆς, καὶ τὸ μεθι-  
 στάναι τὰς τοῦ σώματος κράσεις ἢ διαθέσεις τὴν μουσικὴν, καὶ τὸ ἄλλοις 5  
 μὲν μέλεσιν ἀναβακχεύεσθαι ἄλλοις δ' ἀποπαύεσθαι τῆς βακχείας, καὶ  
 πῶς αἱ τούτων διαφοραὶ πρὸς τὰς τῆς ψυχῆς ἐκάστας διαθέσεις προσαρ-  
 μόττουσι, καὶ ὅτι τὸ ἄστατον καὶ ἀκατάστατον μέλος πρὸς τὰς ἐκστάσεις  
 οἰκεῖον, οἷα δὴ ἐστὶ τὰ Ὀλύμπου, καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα λέγεται, πάντα ἄλλο-  
 τρίως μοι δοκεῖ λέγεσθαι πρὸς τὸν ἐνθουσιασμόν· φυσικὰ τε γὰρ ἐστὶ καὶ 10  
 ἀνθρώπινα καὶ τέχνης ἡμετέρας ἔργα· τὸ δὲ θεῖον ἐν αὐτοῖς οὐδ' ὅπως  
 τιούν διαφαίνεται.

Μᾶλλον οὖν ἐκεῖνα λέγομεν, ὡς ἥχοι τε καὶ μέλη καθιέρονται τοῖς  
 [119] θεοῖς οἰκεῖως ἐκάστοις, συγγενεία τε | αὐτοῖς ἀποδέδοται προσφόρως κατὰ 1

[117].11 αὐλῶν V: αὐτῶν M || 12 τῷ V: τῶν M | Σαβαζίῳ scr.  
 Gale: Σαβαξίῳ V Σαβαξίων M Σαβαζίων scr. i. m. B<sup>3</sup> || [118].3 τι V: om. M  
 | εἶναι VM: p. n. V || 8 ἀκατάστατον ] ἀποκατάστατον i. m. Z<sup>3</sup>

9 In addition to these things, you say the following: "Some of these ecstasies, when hearing pipes,<sup>182</sup> cymbals, tambourines, or some tune, become possessed as, for example, the Korybantes,<sup>183</sup> those possessed by Sabazios,<sup>184</sup> and those serving the Great Mother."<sup>185</sup> It is thus necessary to discuss their causes, how they came into being, and what reason there is for performing these rites.<sup>186</sup>

Well, then; that music is moving and sensuous, and that the sound of pipes causes or heals disordered passions; that music displaces the temperaments or dispositions of the body; that by some tunes the Bacchic frenzy is aroused, but by others, the Bacchic frenzy is made to cease, and how the differences of these accord with the individual dispositions of the soul; and that the unstable and irregular tune is proper to ecstasies, such as those of Olympus,<sup>187</sup> and all which are said to be such: all this seems to me to be irrelevant when mentioned in connection with divine possession. For these are both physical and human, and accomplishments of our skill, and the divine is in no way manifested in them.

What we would rather say, then, is this: that those things such as sounds and tunes are properly consecrated to each of the gods, and kinship is properly assigned to them in accord with

<sup>182</sup> The αὐλός, according to Aristotle, had not a moralistic but an excitative (ὀργιαστικόν) influence and therefore ought to be used for catharsis and not for instruction (*Pol.* 1341a21–23). Aristotle linked the flute and the Phrygian mode of music specifically with Bacchic revelry (a link made by "Abamon" above), saying that they are "both exciting and passionate" (ἄμφω γὰρ ὀργιαστικά καὶ παθητικά, *Pol.* 1342b3).

<sup>183</sup> The ecstatic Korybantes were associated with the cult of Cybele; see Strabo, *Geogr.* 10.3.12. However, Linforth (1946) has shown that their title was synonymous with a variety of ecstatic cult and activity.

<sup>184</sup> A Phrygian deity, sometimes later identified with Dionysos.

<sup>185</sup> Or Rhea Cybele. Note Julian's *Oration* 5, addressed to Cybele, for a Neoplatonising angle on this cult. The priests of Cybele used to castrate themselves in imitation of Attis, and wandered about as begging prophets, wonder-workers, and quacks. They did not have a good reputation; see [Lucian], *Asin.* 35ff. and Apuleius, *Metam.* 7.24.

<sup>186</sup> On ancient theories concerning music-therapy and the effects of music in ritual, see Plato, *Resp.* 397a–400e; *Leg.* 653c–673a; 700a–701b; 795a–812e; Aristotle, *Pol.* 1339a–1342b; Hermias, *Comm. Phaedr.* 91.22–26 on the telestic rites.

<sup>187</sup> Not the home of the gods but rather of the pipe-player trained by Marsyas. See Plato, *Symp.* 215c3; Proclus, *Comm. Resp.* 1.62.7.

τὰς οἰκείας ἐκάστων τάξεις καὶ δυνάμεις καὶ τὰς ἐν αὐτῷ <τῷ> παντὶ κινήσεις καὶ τὰς ἀπὸ τῶν κινήσεων ῥοιζουμένας ἐναρμονίους φωνάς· κατὰ δὴ τὰς τοιαύτας τῶν μελῶν πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς οἰκειότητος παρουσία τε αὐτῶν γίγνεται (οὐδὲ γάρ ἐστὶ τι τὸ διείργον), ὥστε μετέχειν αὐτῶν εὐθὺς 5 τὸ τὴν τυχοῦσαν ἔχον πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὁμοιότητα, κατοχή τε συνίσταται εὐθὺς τελεία καὶ πλήρωσις τῆς κρείττονος οὐσίας καὶ δυνάμεως. Οὐχ ὅτι τὸ σῶμα καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ ἀλλήλοις ἐστὶ συμπαθῆ καὶ συμπάσχει τοῖς μέλεσιν, ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ τῆς θείας ἁρμονίας ἡ τῶν θεῶν ἐπίπνοια οὐκ ἀφέστηκεν, οἰκειωθείσα δὲ πρὸς αὐτὴν κατ' ἀρχὰς μετέχεται ὑπ' αὐτῆς ἐν μέτροις 10 τοῖς προσήκουσιν· ἔχει δὲ καὶ τὸ ἀνεγείρεσθαι καὶ τὸ ἀποπαύεσθαι κατὰ τὴν τῶν θεῶν τάξιν ἐκότερον. Ἀπέρασιν δὲ καὶ ἀποκάθαρσιν ἱατρείαν τε οὐδαμῶς αὐτὸ κλητέον. Οὐδὲ γὰρ κατὰ νόσημά τι ἢ πλεονασμὸν ἢ πε-  
 [120] ρίττωμα | πρῶτως ἐν ἡμῖν ἐμφύεται, θεία δ' αὐτοῦ συνίσταται ἢ πᾶσα 1 ἄνωθεν ἀρχὴ καὶ καταβολή.

Ἀλλ' οὐδὲ τοῦτο δεῖ λέγειν, ὥς ἡ ψυχὴ πρῶτως ὑφέστηκεν ἐξ ἁρμονίας καὶ ῥυθμοῦ· ἔστι γὰρ οὕτω ψυχῆς μόνης οἰκεῖος ὁ ἐνθουσιασμός· βέλτιον οὖν καὶ τὴν τοιαύτην ἀπόφασιν ἐκεῖσε μετέγειν, ὅτι δὴ ἡ ψυχὴ, 5 πρὶν καὶ τῷ σώματι δοῦναι ἐαυτήν, τῆς θείας ἁρμονίας κατήκονεν· οὐκοῦν καὶ ἐπειδὴν εἰς σῶμα ἀφίκεται, ὅσα ἂν μέλη τοιαῦτα ἀκούσῃ οἶα μάλιστα διασώζει τὸ θεῖον ἵχνος τῆς ἁρμονίας, ἀσπάζεται ταῦτα καὶ ἀναμιμνήσκειται ἀπ' αὐτῶν τῆς θείας ἁρμονίας, καὶ πρὸς αὐτὴν φέρεται καὶ οἰκειοῦται, μεταλαμβάνει τε αὐτῆς ὅσον οἶόν τε αὐτῆς μετέχειν. 10

10 Κοινῶς μὲν οὖν οὕτως ἂν τις ἀποδοιῇ τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς θείας μαντείας· τοὺς δ' ἰδίους περὶ αὐτῆς ἀπολογισμοὺς προσάγομεν, οὐ τοῦτο λέγοντες, ὅτι ἡ φύσις ἕκαστον ἄγει πρὸς τὸ οἰκεῖον· οὐδὲ γάρ ἐστι  
 [121] φύσεως ἔργον | τὸ ἐνθουσιᾶν· οὐδ' ὅτι ἡ τοῦ ἁέρος καὶ τοῦ περιέχοντος 1 κρᾶσις διάφορον ἐμποιεῖ καὶ τὴν ἐν τῷ σώματι κρᾶσιν τῶν ἐνθουσιῶν-

[119].2 <τῷ> nos || 3 ῥοιζουμένας M: ῥοιζομέννας V || 6 κατοχή cj. Boulliau i. m. U et B<sup>3</sup>: κατωχή (τ et κ p. n., κ et τ s. v. et κατωχή i. m.) V<sup>2</sup> τακωχή V κακωχή M κατοκωχή cj. i. m. B<sup>3</sup> || 8 συμπαθῆ fec. B<sup>c</sup>: συμπαθεῖ VMB (dualis) || 9 ἐπεὶ (εἰ ex ἰ) V<sup>2</sup>: ἐπὶ VM || 10 αὐτῆς (ῆς i. m.) V<sup>2</sup>: αὐτοῖς VM || 12 ἀπέρασιν ] ἀ πέρασι scr. B ἀφαίρεσιν cj. i. m. B<sup>5</sup> || [120].8 διασώζει V: διασώζη M

their proper orders and powers, the motions in the universe itself and the harmonious sounds rushing<sup>188</sup> from its motions. It is, then, in virtue of such connections of the tunes with the gods that their presence occurs (for nothing intervenes to stop them) so that whatever has a fortuitous likeness with them, immediately participates in them, and a total possession and filling with superior being and power takes place at once. It is not that the body and soul interact with one another or with the tones, but since the inspiration of the gods is not separated from the divine harmony, having been allied with it from the beginning, it is shared by it in suitable measures. Each of them enjoys wakefulness and repose, each singly, according to the order of the gods. But this is never to be called a purging, purification, or cure; for it does not grow in us primarily on account of any disease, superabundance, or excess, but its whole origin from above and descent below is divine.

But one should not even claim this, that the soul primarily consists of harmony and rhythm; for in that case divine possession would belong to the soul alone. It is better, then, to bring our discourse back to this assertion: before it gave itself to the body, the soul heard the divine harmony. And accordingly even when it entered the body, such tunes as it hears which especially preserve the divine trace of harmony, to these it clings fondly and is reminded by them of the divine harmony; it is also borne along with and closely allied to this harmony, and shares as much as can be shared of it.<sup>189</sup>

**10** One may, then, generally explain in this way the cause of divine prophetic power. But we may continue with explanations of special kinds, for we do not claim that nature guides each thing to what is akin to it; that divine possession is even a product of nature, or that a mixture of the air and surrounding environment even makes a difference in the bodily constitution of those in

<sup>188</sup> ῥοιζος was a Chaldaean and/or Pythagorean term for the sound caused by the planetary revolutions; see *Orac. chald.* frg. 37; 146 Des Places; Proclus, *Comm. Resp.* 2.76.20–21. See also Lewy (1978, 19 n. 46). Iamblichus, *Vit. pyth.* 15.65.3 states that Pythagoras “purified the confused minds” of his disciples, sending them into a prophetic sleep with his musical imitations of the celestial spheres.

<sup>189</sup> An obvious echo of the soul’s recollection of the good at Plato, *Phaedr.* 250b–251a; cf. *Resp.* 402a.



των (οὐδὲ γὰρ σωματικαῖς δυνάμεσιν ἢ κράσεσι τὰ τῶν θεῶν ἔργα τῆς ἐπιπνοίας ἐναλλάττεται)· οὐδ' ὅτι πρὸς τὰ πάθη καὶ τὰ γιννόμενα προσ-  
 φόρως καὶ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπεφήμισαν ἐπίπνοιαν (ἀπαθῆς γὰρ καὶ κρείττων 5  
 πάσης γενέσεως ἢ δόσις τῶν θεῶν εἰς ἀνθρώπους ἐστὶ τῆς οἰκειᾶς ἐνε-  
 γείας). Ἄλλ' ἐπεὶ τῶν μὲν Κορυβάντων φρουρητικὴ πῶς ἐστὶν ἡ δύναμις  
 καὶ ἐπιτελεστική, τοῦ Σαβαζίου δ' εἰς βακχείας καὶ ἀποκαθάρσεις ψυχῶν  
 καὶ λύσεις παλαιῶν μνημάτων οἰκειότητα παρεσκεύασται, διὰ ταῦτα δὴ  
 καὶ αἱ ἐπίπνοιαὶ αὐτῶν τῷ παντὶ διεστήκασιν. 10

Τῆς δὲ μητρὸς τῶν θεῶν σὺ μὲν ἔοικας ἄρρενας εἶναι νομίζειν τοὺς  
 κατόχους· οὕτω γὰρ αὐτοὺς καὶ προσηγόρευσας τοὺς μητρίζοντας· οὐ μὴν  
 τό γε ἀληθὲς οὕτως ἔχει· γυναιῖκες γάρ εἰσιν αἱ προηγούμενως μητρίζου-  
 [122] σαι, ἄρρένων δ' ὀλιγοστοὶ καὶ ὅσοι ἂν ὦσιν ἀπαλώτεροι. Δύ|ναμιν δ' ἔχει 1  
 καὶ οὗτος ὁ ἐνθουσιασμὸς ζωογόνον τε καὶ ἀποπληρωματικὴν, καθὸ δὴ  
 καὶ διαφερόντως τῆς ἄλλης μανίας πάσης διενήνοχεν.

Οὕτω δὴ οὖν καθ' ὁδὸν ἰόντες τὴν ἐξῆς τοῦ παρόντος λόγου καὶ τὰς  
 τῶν Νυμφῶν ἢ Πανὸς ἐπιπνοίας καὶ τὰς ἄλλας αὐτῶν διαφορὰς κατὰ τὰς 5  
 τῶν θεῶν δυνάμεις οἰκειῶς διακρίνοντες, διαστήσομεν κατὰ τὰς προσ-  
 ηκούσας αὐτῶν ιδιότητας ἐξηγησόμεθα τε διὰ τί ἐκπηδῶσι καὶ ἐν ὄρεσι  
 διατρίβουσι καὶ διὰ τί δεδεμένοι φαίνονται τινες καὶ διὰ τί διὰ θυσιῶν θε-  
 ραπεύονται· πάντα τε ταῦτα τοῖς θεοῖς αἰτίους ἀποδώσομεν ὥς ἔχουσιν  
 ἐν ἑαυτοῖς τὸ πᾶν κῦρος· ἀλλ' οὔτε σωματικά τινα ἢ τῆς ψυχῆς περιπτώ- 10  
 ματα συναθροιζόμενα δεῖσθαι τοῦ ἀποκαθαίρεσθαι ἐροῦμεν, οὔτε ὠρῶν

[121].8 Σαβαζίου cj. i. m. B<sup>3</sup>: Σαβαζίου VM | βακχείας cj. i. m. B<sup>3</sup>:  
 βραχείας VM || [122].7 διὰ τί scr. Gale: διὰ τι V δι' & M || 8 δεδεμένοι (ε  
 s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: δεδομένοι VM

possessed states (for the divine works of inspiration are not modified by corporeal powers or constitutions); or that it is in reference to emotional states and occurrences appropriate to them that they name the inspiration of the god (for the gods' gift to mortals<sup>190</sup> of their own activity is impassive and superior to all generation). But since the power of the Korybantes is somehow supervisory<sup>191</sup> and geared to the fulfilling of purposes, whereas that of Sabazios is geared for Bacchic frenzies and purifications of souls and deliverances from old blood guilt,<sup>192</sup> their inspirations are, for these reasons, wholly different.

You seem to believe that those possessed by the Mother of the gods are male; for so you have called them "men possessed by the Mother of the gods." But that is not, in fact, true: for it is chiefly women who are possessed by the Mother of the gods; very few are males, and those who are tend to be rather effeminate.<sup>193</sup> And this form of possession has a life-engendering and fulfilling power, in which respect it differs completely from every other form of frenzy.

Continuing thus in the order of what comes next in the present discourse, and turning to isolate suitably the inspirations of nymphs or Pan,<sup>194</sup> and their other differences in regard to the powers of the gods involved, we shall treat them separately according to their relevant peculiarities, and explain why they frisk about and spend time in the mountains, why some of them appear bound,<sup>195</sup> and why some are honoured by sacrifices. We shall attribute all these things to divine causes since they possess all authority in themselves; but we will not say that some bodily excesses or excesses of the soul need to be cleansed away, nor

<sup>190</sup> Cf. Plato, *Phileb.* 16c5.

<sup>191</sup> The term *φρουρητική* here slots the Korybantes neatly into the Neoplatonic system. Cf. Proclus, *ET* prop. 154; *Theol. plat.* 6.13.

<sup>192</sup> Cf. Plato, *Phaedr.* 244d6.

<sup>193</sup> Not one of "Abamon's" better debating points.

<sup>194</sup> The mountain-god Pan was often held to be responsible for the sudden and irrational panic which can set in when people are in lonely and remote surroundings. Generally considered to be the son of Hermes, he was supposedly the inventor of the pipe of seven reeds that he named *syrinx* after one of his favourite nymphs.

<sup>195</sup> This is somewhat mysterious, but may have reference to binding spells popular in the mystical tradition; see *PGM* IV. 2247; 2327; 2904, and the loosening of bonds, e.g. *PGM* XII. 173; XIII. 2947.

περιόδους αἰτίας εἶναι τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων, οὔτε τὴν τοῦ ὁμοίου καταδοχὴν καὶ τὴν τοῦ ἐναντίου ἀφαίρεσιν ἱατρείαν τινὰ φέρειν τῆς τοιαύτης ὑπερβολῆς φήσομεν· τὰ γὰρ τοιαῦτα πάντα σωματοειδῆ | καθέστηκε, 1  
ζωῆς δὲ θείας καὶ νοεράς πάντῃ κεχώρισται. Ἐκαστον δὲ ἥ πέφυκε ταύτη συμβαίνει καὶ τὰ περὶ αὐτὸ ἐνεργήματα τελεῖσθαι· ὥστε καὶ τὰ ἀπὸ τῶν θεῶν ἐγείροντα καὶ ἀναβακχεύοντα τοὺς ἀνθρώπους πνεύματα ἐκβέβληκεν ἄλλην πᾶσαν ἀνθρωπίνην καὶ φυσικὴν κίνησιν, καὶ οὐ δεῖ δὴ τὸν 5  
τρόπον αὐτῶν ἀφομοιοῦν ταῖς συνήθως γινωσκομέναις ἐνεργείαις, ἐπὶ δὲ τὰ παντελῶς παραλλάττοντα καὶ πρωτογενῶς τῶν θεῶν αἷτια αὐτὰς ἀνάγειν προσήκει.

**11** Ἐν μὲν δὴ οὖν τοῦτο εἶδος θεοφορίας τοιόνδε καὶ οὕτω γιγνόμενον ὑπάρχει· ἕτερον δὲ τὸ τῶν χρηστηρίων διαβόητον καὶ ἐναργέστατον 10  
ἐστὶ πολυμερὲς ἔνθεον μαντεῖον, περὶ οὗ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἀποφαίνει· οἱ δὲ ὕδωρ πίνοντες, καθάπερ ὁ ἐν Κολοφῶνι ἱερεὺς τοῦ Κλαρίου, οἱ δὲ στομίους παρακαθήμενοι, ὡς αἱ ἐν Δελφοῖς θεσπίζουσαι, οἱ δ' ἐξ ὕδατων ἀτμιζόμενοι, 1  
[124] καθάπερ αἱ ἐν Βραγχίδαῖς προφῆτιδες. Τριῶν δὲ τουτωνὶ διωνύμων χρηστηρίων ἐμνημόνευσας, οὐχ ὅτι μόνῃ ἐνταῦθα, πολλὰ γὰρ πλείονα ὑπῆρχε τὰ παραλειπόμενα· ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ προεῖχε τῶν ἄλλων ταῦτα, καὶ ἅμα οὗ ἕνεκα ἐζητεῖτο ἱκανῶς ἀνεδίδασκες, περὶ τοῦ τρόπου φημὶ τῆς ἐκ θεῶν ἀνθρώποις ἐπιπεμπομένης μαντείας, διὰ τοῦτο δὴ ἠρκέσθης τούτοις. Καὶ ἡμεῖς 5  
οὖν περὶ τῶν τριῶν τούτων ποιησόμεθα λόγον, τὸν περὶ τῶν πολλῶν μαντείων λόγον ὑπερβάντες.

Τὸ δὴ ἐν Κολοφῶνι μαντεῖον ὁμολογεῖται παρὰ πᾶσι δι' ὕδατος χρηματίζεσθαι. Εἶναι γὰρ πηγὴν ἐν οἴκῳ καταγεῖν καὶ ἀπ' αὐτῆς πίνειν τὸν προφήτην ἐν τισὶ τακταῖς νυξίν, ἱερουργιῶν πολλῶν γενομένων πρότερον, 10

[123].6 συνήθως M: συνήθων V | γινωσκομέναις VM: γινομέναις cj. Gale || 11 ἀποφαίνει VM: ἀποφαίνεις scr. Gale || 12 κλαρίου cj. i. m. Z<sup>4</sup> et Boulliau i. m. R et U: βλαρίου VM || 14 βραγχίδαῖς scr. Gale: βρακχίδαῖς M et (αι ex ε, δαις i. m.) V<sup>2</sup> βρακχίδες V || [124].1 τουτωνὶ διωνύμων M: τούτων ἰδιονύμων V || 2 ἐνταῦθα] ἦν ταῦτα cj. Gale || 4 ἀνεδίδασκες VM: ἀν ἐδίδασκες scr. Gale || 5 ἠρκέσθης V: ἠρκέσθην M || 10 τισι V: τισι δὲ M

that seasonal periods are causes of these conditions, nor that the reception of the like and removal of the contrary, will offer a remedy for such excess. For all such things are corporeal and wholly separated from a divine and intellectual life. But each thing accomplishes its own activities according to its nature, so that, in fact, spirits from the gods, arousing humans and causing them to burst into Bacchic frenzy, drive out all other human and natural activity, and we shall not compare their manner of existence to those activities known in ordinary ways: but it is proper to trace them back to divine causes, wholly other and primordial.

11 This, then, is one kind of divine transport and how it comes about. Another kind of divination, famous and most splendid, is that of the inspired oracle, which takes diverse forms. About this you declare the following: "Some are inspired while drinking water, like the priest of Clarian Apollo in Colophon;<sup>196</sup> others while sitting near apertures like the women who prophesy at Delphi;<sup>197</sup> others while inhaling vapours from waters, like the prophetesses of the Branchidai."<sup>198</sup> You have mentioned three of these far-famed oracles, not because there are only three, for those omitted are much more numerous, but since these take precedence over the others, you have at the same time sufficiently explained why you investigate them—that is to say, you were concerned with the mode in which divination is imparted to human beings by the gods, and it was for this reason that you were content to select these, and thus we will take account of these three, while passing over the many other oracles.

It is agreed by everyone that the oracle at Colophon prophesies by means of water. There is a spring in a subterranean chamber, and from it the prophet drinks on certain appointed nights, after performing many preliminary ceremonies, and after

<sup>196</sup> Both the god and his oracle are called "Clarios" because of the small town of Claros west of Colophon, and northwest of Ephesos. See Buresch (1889). On "Abamon's" account of this oracle, cf. Parke (1985, 219–24); Clarke (2001, 59–60).

<sup>197</sup> Cf. Proclus ap. Psellos, *Script. Min.* 1.248.16–18: "there are others who work themselves up into a state of inspiration deliberately, like the prophetess at Delphi when she sits over the chasm."

<sup>198</sup> The Branchidai were descendants of Branchos, favoured by Apollo and charged with the oracle at Didyma. On this oracle see Günther (1971); Athanassiadi (1989–1990); Fontenrose (1988); Clarke (2001, 63–65).

πιόντα δὲ χρησιμωδεῖν οὐκ ἐθ' ὁρώμενον τοῖς παροῦσι θεωροῖς. Τὸ μὲν οὖν εἶναι μαντικὸν ἐκεῖνο τὸ ὕδωρ αὐτόθεν προόδηλον· τὸ δὲ πῶς ἐστὶ τοιοῦτον, οὐκ ἐτ' ἄν, κατὰ τὴν παροιμίαν, πᾶς ἀνὴρ γνοίη· δοκεῖ μὲν γὰρ διήκειν τι δι' αὐτοῦ πνεῦμα μαντικόν· οὐ μέντοι τό γε ἀληθὲς οὕτως ἔχει. Τὸ γὰρ [125] θεῖον οὐ διαπεφοίτηκεν οὕτω διαστατῶς καὶ μεριστῶς ἐν | τοῖς αὐτοῦ 1 μετέχουσιν, ἀλλ' ὥς παρέχον ἕξωθεν καὶ ἐπιλάμπον τὴν πηγὴν, πληροῖ δυνάμεως αὐτὴν ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ μαντικῆς· οὐ μέντοι τοῦ γε θεοῦ πᾶσά ἐστιν ἢ ἐπίπνοια ἥντινα παρέχει τὸ ὕδωρ, ἀλλ' αὕτη μὲν ἐπιτηδειότηता μόνον καὶ ἀποκάθαρσιν τοῦ ἐν ἡμῖν αὐγοειδοῦς πνεύματος ἐμποιεῖ, δι' ἣν δυνατοὶ 5 γιγνώμεθα χωρεῖν τὸν θεόν. Ἄλλη δ' ἐστὶν ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ παρουσία καὶ προτέρα ταύτης καὶ ἄνωθεν ἐναστράπτουσα· αὕτη τοίνυν οὐδενὸς ἀφέστηκε τῶν ἐχόντων διὰ τῆς οἰκειότητος συναφὴν πρὸς ἑαυτήν· πάρεστι δ' εὐθὺς καὶ χρῆται ὥς ὄργάνῳ τῷ προφήτῃ οὔτε ἑαυτοῦ ὄντι οὔτε παρακολου- 10 θοῦντι οὐδὲν οἷς λέγει ἢ ὅπου γῆς ἐστίν· ὥστε καὶ μετὰ τὴν χρησιμωδίαν μόγῃς ποτὲ ἑαυτὸν λαμβάνει· καὶ πρὸ τοῦ πίνειν δὲ οὕτως ἀσιτεῖ τὴν ἡμέραν ὅλην καὶ νύκτα, καὶ ἐν ἱεροῖς τισιν ἀβάτοις τῷ πλήθει καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἀνακεχώρηκεν ἀρχόμενος ἐνθουσιᾶν, καὶ διὰ τῆς ἀποστάσεως καὶ ἀπαλλαγῆς τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων πραγμάτων ἄχραντον ἑαυτὸν εἰς ὑποδοχὴν τοῦ [126] θεοῦ παρασκευάζει· ἐξ ὧν δὴ εἰς καθαρὰν ἔδραν τῆς ἑαυτοῦ ψυχῆς | ἐλ- 1 λάμπουνσαν ἔχει τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐπίπνοιαν, ἀκώλυτόν τε αὐτῇ παρέχει τὴν κατοκωχὴν καὶ τὴν παρουσίαν τελείαν ἀνεμπόδιστον.

Ἡ δ' ἐν Δελφοῖς προφήτις, εἴτε ἀπὸ πνεύματος λεπτοῦ καὶ πυρῶ- 5 δους ἀναφερομένου ποθὲν ἀπὸ στομίου θεμιστεύει τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, εἴτε ἐν τῷ ἀδύτῳ καθημένη ἐπὶ δίφρου χαλκοῦ τρεῖς πόδας ἔχοντος χρηματίζει, εἴτε καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ τετράποδος δίφρου ὅς ἐστιν ἱερὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, πανταχῇ οὕτω δίδωσιν ἑαυτὴν τῷ θεῷ πνεύματι, ἀπὸ τε τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ πυρὸς

[125].5 αὐγοειδοῦς ] γειωδοῦς cj. Boulliau i. m. R et U || 11 μόγῃς V et (γ s. v.) M<sup>2</sup>: μόλις M || 13 ἀνακεχώρηκεν scr. B: ἀνακεχώρικεν VM | ἐνθουσιᾶν VM: ἐνθουσιῶν cj. B || [126].2 αὐτῇ V: ἑαυτῇ M || 3 κατοκωχὴν scripsi: κατακωχὴν VM | τελείαν VM: τελείαν καὶ cj. B || 6 ἔχοντος M et (o s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: ἔχοντας V

drinking, he delivers his oracles, no longer seen by the spectators present. That this water has oracular power is immediately obvious. But how this is so, as the saying goes, "not every man may know."<sup>199</sup> For it seems that some prophetic spirit passes through the water; but this is not correct, for the divine does not permeate what partakes in a fragmented and divided manner, but it is by exercising its power from without, and illuminating the spring, that it fills it with its own prophetic power. Still, not every inspiration that the water gives is from the god, but this only bestows the receptivity and purification of the luminous spirit in us,<sup>200</sup> through which we are able to receive the god. But the presence of the god is different from and prior to this, and flashes like lightning from above. This holds aloof from no one who, through a kindred nature, is in union with it; but it is immediately present, and uses the prophet as an instrument while he is neither himself nor has any consciousness of what he says or where on the earth he is, so that even after prophesying, he sometimes scarcely gets control of himself.<sup>201</sup> Even before drinking, he fasts the whole day and night, and after becoming divinely inspired, he withdraws by himself to sacred, inaccessible places, and by this withdrawal and separation from human affairs, he purifies himself for receiving the god; and through these means, he has the inspiration of god illuminating the pure sanctuary of his own soul, and providing for it an unhindered divine possession, and a perfect and unimpeded presence.

The prophetess at Delphi, however, whether she gives oracles to human beings from a subtle and fiery spirit brought up from an aperture, or prophesies in the innermost sanctuary while seated on a bronze stool with three legs, or on a seat with four legs that is sacred to the god, she thus gives herself absolutely to the divine spirit, and is illuminated by the ray of divine fire. And

<sup>199</sup> Cf. Plato, *Epin.* 978a1.

<sup>200</sup> A reference to the soul-vehicle, which was the pneumatic mediating entity between the soul and the body and, if we accept the influence of Hermetic and/or Chaldaean concepts, between man and the divine; see Dodds (1963, 313–18) on the origins of the idea. Porphyry played down the role of theurgy by arguing that its usefulness for purifying corrupted soul-vehicles was its sole and limited power (Porphyry ap. Proclus, *Comm. Tim.* 3.234.18–32; *Regr.* frg. 2).

<sup>201</sup> For prophesy in an ecstatic trance within the magical papyri, see *PGM* IV. 435–439.

ἀκτίνος καταγράφεται. Καὶ ὅταν μὲν ἀθρόον καὶ πολὺ τὸ ἀναφερόμενον ἀπὸ τοῦ στομίον πῦρ κύκλῳ πανταχόθεν αὐτὴν περιέχῃ, πληροῦται ἀπ' αὐτοῦ θείας ἀγῆς· ὅταν δ' εἰς ἔδραν ἐνιδρυνθῇ τοῦ θεοῦ, τῇ σταθερᾷ τοῦ θεοῦ μαντικῇ δυνάμει συναρμόζεται· ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων δὲ τῶν τοιούτων παρασκευῶν ὅλη γίγνεται τοῦ θεοῦ. Καὶ τότε δὴ πάρεστιν αὐτῇ χωριστῶς [127] ὁ θεὸς ἐπιλάμπων, ἕτερος ὢν καὶ τοῦ πυρὸς καὶ τοῦ πνεύματος καὶ | τῆς ἰδίας ἔδρας καὶ πάσης τῆς περὶ τὸν τόπον φυσικῆς καὶ ἱερᾶς φαινομένης κατασκευῆς.

Καὶ μὴν ἢ γε ἐν Βραγχίδαῖς γυνὴ χρησμοφδός, εἴτε ῥάβδον ἔχουσα τὴν πρῶτως ὑπὸ θεοῦ τινος παραδοθεῖσαν πληροῦται τῆς θείας ἀγῆς, εἴτε ἐπὶ ἄξονος καθημένη προλέγει τὸ μέλλον, εἴτε τοὺς πόδας ἢ κράσπεδόν τι τέγγουσα τῷ ὕδατι ἢ ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος ἀτμιζομένη δέχεται τὸν θεόν, ἐξ ἀπάντων τούτων ἐπιτηδεῖα παρασκευαζομένη πρὸς τὴν ὑποδοχὴν ἔξωθεν αὐτοῦ μεταλαμβάνει.

Δηλοῖ δὲ καὶ τὸ τῶν θυσιῶν πλῆθος καὶ ὁ θεσμός τῆς ὅλης ἀγιστείας καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα δρᾶται πρὸ τῆς χρησμοφδίας θεοπρεπῶς, τά τε λουτρὰ τῆς προφήτιδος καὶ ἡ τριῶν ὄλων ἡμερῶν ἀσιτία καὶ ἡ ἐν ἀδύτοις αὐτῆς διατριβὴ καὶ ἔχομένης ἤδη τῷ φωτὶ καὶ τερπομένης ἐν πολλῷ χρόνῳ· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὰ πάντα παρὰ κλησιν τοῦ θεοῦ ὥστε παραγενέσθαι καὶ παρουσίαν ἔξωθεν ἐπιδείκνυσιν, ἐπίπνοιάν τε θαυμασίαν οἶαν πρὶν καὶ εἰς τὸν συνήθη [128] τόπον ἀφικέσθαι, καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἀπὸ τῆς πηγῆς | ἀναφερομένην ἕτερόν τινα πρεσβύτερον χωριστὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ τόπου θεὸν ἀναφαίνει,

[126].14 ἐπιλάμπων M: ἐπιλάμπει V || [127].13 ἔχομένης VM: κατε-  
χομένης cj. Gale | τερπομένης V: ἐρπομένης M

when the fiery spirit coming up from the aperture,<sup>202</sup> dense and abundant, envelops her entirely in a circle, she is filled by it with a divine brightness; whenever she is found on the seat of the god, she is in harmony with the divine, unwavering oracular power. And as a result of both these preparations she becomes wholly the god's possession. Then, indeed, the god is present, shining on her separately, being himself other than the fire, the spirit, the particular abode, and all the physical and sacred trappings appearing in connection with the place.

And as for the woman at Branchidai who gives oracles, it is either by holding the staff first given by a certain god<sup>203</sup> that she is filled by the divine radiance; or else when sitting on the axle<sup>204</sup> she predicts the future; or whether dipping her feet or skirt in the water, or inhaling vapour from the water, at any rate, she receives the god: prepared and made ready by any or all of these preliminaries for his reception from without, she partakes of the god.

This is what is shown by the abundance of sacrifices, the established custom of the whole ritual, and everything that is performed with due piety prior to divination: also the baths of the prophetess, her fasting for three whole days, abiding in the innermost sanctuaries, already possessed by light, and rejoicing in it for a long time. For all these things show that the god has been invoked, and that his arrival comes from without, a marvellous inspiration even before coming to his accustomed place; and in the very spirit rising up from the spring<sup>205</sup> it shows forth another god,

<sup>202</sup> Oppé (1904) disproved the theory that the chasm at Delphi emitted mephitic vapours almost a century ago, but this ancient fantasy lingers on in the modern mind (see esp. De Boer, Hale, and Chanton, 2001). For the notion, see Pliny, *Nat.* 2.208; Diodorus Siculus 16.26; Pausanias 10.5.7; Plutarch, *Mor.* 434b4–5; Strabo, *Geogr.* 9.3.5. “Abamon” is clearly a whole-hearted believer in the myth. On the oracle of Apollo at Delphi see Amandry (1950); Athanassiadi (1989–1990); Fontenrose (1978); Clarke (2001, 60–63).

<sup>203</sup> The staff of Apollo, supposedly passed to his loyal followers, and the symbol of prophetic power at Didyma.

<sup>204</sup> For speculation on the use of an “axle” at Didyma, see Fontenrose (1988, 80–83) and Parke (1985, 212). *PGM* IV. 681 exemplifies prayers to the guardians of the ἄξων who command the revolving axis of the vault of heaven; cf. *PGM* VII. 686–690, but this may be entirely irrelevant.

<sup>205</sup> Des Places takes πηγῇ as meaning “fount” or “source” here, but “spring” seems more appropriate given the context.



τὸν αἴτιον καὶ τοῦ τόπου καὶ τῆς πηγῆς αὐτῆς καὶ τῆς μαντικῆς ὁλης.

**12** Φαίνεται δὴ οὖν καὶ ἡ τῶν χρηστηρίων μαντεία συνομολογοῦσα ταῖς ὁλαῖς ὑποθέσεσιν ἃς προειρήκαμεν περὶ τῆς μαντικῆς. Ἀχώριστος μὲν γὰρ οὖσα τῆς φύσεως τῶν τόπων καὶ τῶν ὑποκειμένων αὐτῇ σωμάτων ἢ τοιαύτη δύναμις, ἢ προϊούσα κατὰ κίνησιν τὴν ἀφοριζομένην ἀριθμῶ, οὐ δύναται τὰ πανταχοῦ καὶ ἀεὶ προγιγνώσκειν ὡσαύτως· ἀφειμένη δ' ἀπόλυτος τῶν τόπων καὶ τῶν διαμεμετρημένων τοῖς ἀριθμοῖς χρόνων (ἅτε δὴ κρείττων οὖσα τῶν γιγνομένων κατὰ χρόνον καὶ τῶν ὑπὸ τόπου κατεχομένων) τοῖς πανταχοῦ οὖσιν ἐξ ἴσου πάρεστι, καὶ τοῖς κατὰ χρόνον φυομένοις πάντοτε ἅμα σύνεστιν, ἐν ἐνὶ τε συνείληφε τῶν ὅλων τὴν ἀλήθειαν διὰ τὴν χωριστὴν ἑαυτῆς καὶ ὑπερέχουσαν οὐσίαν.

[129] **Εἰ δὴ ταῦτα ὀρθῶς εἰρήκαμεν**, ὑπ' οὐδενὸς οὔτε τόπου | οὔτε μερ- 1  
στοῦ σώματος ἀνθρωπίνου οὔτε ψυχῆς κατεχομένης ἐν ἐνὶ εἵδει μεριστῶν περιείληπται μεριστῶς ἢ μαντικῇ τῶν θεῶν δύναμις, χωριστὴ δ' οὖσα καὶ ἀδιαίρετος ὅλη πανταχοῦ πάρεστι τοῖς μεταλαμβάνειν αὐτῆς δυναμένοις, ἐξωθεν τε ἐπιλάμπει καὶ πληροὶ πάντα, δι' ὅλων τε τῶν στοιχείων διαπε- 5  
φοίτηκε, γῆν τε καὶ αἴρα καὶ πῦρ καὶ ὕδωρ κατείληφεν, οὐδέν τε ἄμοιρον ἑαυτῆς οὔτε τῶν ζώων οὔτε τῶν ἀπὸ φύσεως διοικουμένων ἀπολείπει, ἀλλὰ τοῖς μὲν μᾶλλον τοῖς δὲ ἦττον ἀφ' ἑαυτῆς δίδωσιν τινα μοῖραν προ-  
γνώσεως· αὐτὴ μέντοι πρὸ τῶν ὅλων προϋπάρχουσα αὐτῷ τῷ χωριστῷ ἑαυτῆς ἱκανὴ γέγονεν ἀποπληρῶσαι πάντα, καθ' ὅσον ἕκαστα δύναται αὐ- 10  
τῆς μετέχειν.

**13** Ἰδωμεν τοίνυν τὸ ἐντεῦθεν ἄλλο εἶδος ἰδιωτικὸν καὶ οὐ δημόσιον μαντείας, περὶ οὗ λέγεις ταῦτα· «οἱ δ' ἐπὶ χαρακτῆρων στάντες ὡς οἱ πληρούμενοι ἀπὸ εἰσκρίσεων». Τοῦτο τοίνυν διὰ τοὺς κακῶς αὐτῷ χρωμένους οὐ ῥάδιον ἐν ἐνὶ λόγῳ περιλαβεῖν. Ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν πρόχειρον 15  
[130] καὶ κακῶς ἐπιπολάζον ἐν τοῖς πολλοῖς ἀνθρώποις ψευδολογία τε καὶ | 1  
ἀπάτη χρώμενον οὐκ ἀνεκτῇ, οὐδ' ὅλως ἔχει τινὸς θεοῦ παρουσίαν, κίνησιν δὲ τινα τῆς ψυχῆς ποιεῖται παρὰ τοὺς θεούς, καὶ ἀμυδρὰν τινα ἀπ'

more senior and distinct from the site, who is responsible for the site, the spring, and for all divination.

**12** It is clear, then, that the divination of oracles is consonant with all the suppositions that we expounded previously about prophetic inspiration. For such a power, if inseparable from the nature of places and of bodies subject to it, or preceded by a motion limited by number, cannot know beforehand things everywhere and always in the same manner. But if separate and free from places and times measured by number (since it is superior to things happening in time and held in place) it is equally present with beings wherever they are, and is always at the same time present with those growing in time, and embraces in one the truth of all existing things because of its own separate and superior essence.

If, then, we have stated these things correctly, the divinatory power of the gods is bounded by nothing divisible, neither by place, nor by a divisible human body, nor by a soul contained in any single form of divisible entities, but being separate by itself and indivisible, it is wholly present everywhere to those able to share in it. And it both illuminates from without and fills all things, and permeates all the elements: it embraces both earth, air, fire, and water, and leaves nothing deprived of itself, neither living beings nor beings governed by nature, but to some it gives a greater portion of its foreknowledge, and to others a lesser portion. And existing itself prior to the totality of things, it is sufficient, by its own separateness, to fill all things to the extent that each is able to share in it.

**13** After this, let us now look at another form of divination, private and not public, about which you say this: "of those who stand on (magical) characters, they are filled with spiritual influences."<sup>206</sup> However, because of those who put it to bad use, it is not easy to do justice to this form of divination in a single account. But that which is readily accessible and widespread among the vulgar throng, employing falsehood and deceit of an intolerable nature, enjoys the presence of no god, but produces a certain motion of the soul, contrary to the gods, and draws from them

<sup>206</sup> On the magical characters cf. *PGM* III. 292-303; VII. 586; XIII. 1003. For discussion of the ritual process of standing on the characters, adopted by medieval magicians, see Dodds (1951, 292, 296), and note Ammianus Marcellinus 29.1.29-32.

αὐτῶν εἰδωλικὴν ἔμφρασιν ἔλκει, ἥτις διὰ τὸ ἐξίτηλον τῆς δυνάμεως εἴω-  
 θεν ἐνίοτε ὑπὸ τῶν δαιμονίων φάυλων πνευμάτων ἐπιταράττεσθαι· ἡ δ' 5  
 ὄντως τῶν θεῶν τυγχάνουσα, τὰ τε ἄλλα εἰλικρινῆς καὶ καθαρὰ ἄτρεπτος  
 ἀληθῆς, καὶ δὴ καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἐναντίων πνευμάτων ἄβατός ἐστι καὶ ἀνεμπό-  
 διστος· ὥσπερ γὰρ ἡλίου καταλάμπαντος οὐ πέφυκε τὴν ἀγῆν ὑπομένειν  
 τὸ σκότος, ἐξαίφνης δὲ ἀφανὲς ἄρδην καθίσταται καὶ παντελῶς ἐκ μέσων  
 ὑποχωρεῖ καὶ ἐκποδῶν ἐξίσταται, οὕτω καὶ τῆς πάντα ἀγαθῶν πληρούσης 10  
 τῶν θεῶν δυνάμεως πολλαχόθεν ἐπιλαμπούσης οὐκ ἔχει χώραν ἢ τῶν κα-  
 κῶν ταραχὴν πνευμάτων, οὐδὲ δύνатаι πον διαφαίνεσθαι, ἀλλ' ὥς τὸ μηδὲν  
 ἢ ἐν τῷ μὴ ὄντι κεχώριται, οὐδαμοῦ φύσιν ἔχουσα κινεῖσθαι τῶν κρειτ-  
 τόνων παρόντων ἢ παρενοχλεῖν αὐτοῖς δυναμένη ἡνίκα ἂν ἐπιλάμπωσιν.

[131] | Τί ποτ' οὖν τοσοῦτον διάφορόν ἐστιν ἐκατέρου τούτων, οὐκ ἄλ- 1  
 λους χρήσομαι γνωρίσμασιν εἰς τὴν διάκρισιν αὐτῶν ἢ αὐτοῖς τοῖς παρὰ  
 σοῦ ῥηθείσιν· ὅταν γὰρ εἴπῃς «οἱ ἐπὶ χαρακτήρων στάντες», οὐδὲν ἄλλο  
 ἔοικας σημαίνειν ἢ τὸ αἴτιον τῶν περὶ ταῦτα κακῶν πάντων. Εἰσὶ γάρ 5  
 τινες οἱ τὴν ὅλην πραγματείαν τῆς τελεσιουργοῦ θεωρίας παριδόντες περὶ  
 τε τὸν καλοῦντα καὶ περὶ τὸν ἐπόπτην, τάξιν τε τῆς θρησκείας καὶ τὴν  
 ὁσιωτάτην ἐν πολλῷ χρόνῳ τῶν πόνων ἐμμογήν ἀτιμάσαντες, θεσμούς τε  
 καὶ ἐντυχίας καὶ τὰς ἄλλας ἀριστείας παρωςάμενοι, ἀποχρῶσαν νομίζουσι 10  
 τὴν ἐπὶ τῶν χαρακτήρων μόνην στάσιν, καὶ ταύτην ἐν μιᾷ ὥρᾳ ποιησά-  
 μενοι, εἰσκρίνειν νομίζουσιν τι πνεῦμα· καίτοι τί ἂν γένοιτο ἀπὸ τούτων  
 καλὸν ἢ τέλειον; ἢ πῶς ἔνεστι τὴν αἰδίον καὶ τῷ ὄντι τῶν θεῶν οὐσίαν  
 ἐφημέροις ἔργοις συνάπτεσθαι ἐν ταῖς ἱεραῖς πράξεσι; διὰ ταῦτα δὴ οὖν οἱ  
 [132] τοιοῦτοι προπετεῖς ἄνδρες τοῦ | παντός ἀμαρτάνουσιν, οὐδ' ἄξιον αὐτοῦς 1  
 ἐν μάντεσι καταριθμεῖσθαι.

14 Περὶ δ' ἄλλον γένους μαντικῆς λέγεις ταῦτα· «ἄλλοι παρα-  
 κολουθοῦντες ἑαυτοῖς κατὰ τὰ ἄλλα, κατὰ τὸ φανταστικὸν θειάζουσιν,  
 οἱ μὲν σκότος συνεργὸν λαβόντες οἱ δὲ καταπόσεις τινῶν οἱ δ' ἐπωδὰς 5  
 καὶ συστάσεις· καὶ οἱ μὲν δι' ὕδατος φαντάζονται οἱ δ' ἐν τοίχῳ οἱ δ' ἐν

[130].6 εἰλικρινῆς M: εἰλικρινῆ V || 9 ἐκ μέσων V: ἐν μέσῳ M ||  
 [131].8 ἐντυχίας cj. i. m. B<sup>3</sup> vel B<sup>5</sup>: τελετὰς id. ἐνταχίας VM ἐνταφίας (φ s. v.)  
 V<sup>2</sup> εὐταξίας i. m. B<sup>4</sup> εὐσταθείας i. m. B<sup>5</sup> || 9 ἐπὶ V<sup>c</sup>: ἀπὸ VM || [132].1  
 οὐδ' cj. i. m. B<sup>5</sup>: τοῦ δὲ VM τοῦ (δὲ p. n.) V<sup>2</sup> | ἄξιον VM: ἄξιον εἶναι (εἶναι  
 s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>

an indistinct and phantom-like appearance which sometimes, because of the feebleness of its power, is likely to be disturbed by evil daemonic influences. But there is that type which truly connects with the gods, uncontaminated in all respects, pure, unwavering, true, and is indeed both inaccessible to and unobstructed by spirits of an opposite nature. For just as when the sun shines, the darkness by its nature is not able to resist its light, and suddenly becomes wholly invisible, withdraws completely from its midst, and altogether ceases, so when the power of the gods, filling all with its benefits, shines forth in many directions, the tumult of evil spirits has no place, and cannot manifest itself in any way, but is set apart as nothing or non-being, in no way having a nature to move itself when superior beings are present, or able to cause them annoyance when they shine forth.

As to the great difference between each of these, I will use no other tokens for distinguishing them than those mentioned by you. For when you mention “those who stand upon the characters” you seem to signify nothing else than what is the cause of all evils inherent in these divinations. For there are some who overlook the whole procedure of effective contemplation, both in regard to the one who makes an invocation and the one who enjoys the vision; and they disdain the order of the sacred observance, its holiness and long-protracted endurance of toils, and, rejecting the customs, prayers and other rituals, they believe the simple standing on the characters to be sufficient, and when they have done this for a mere hour, they believe that they have caused some spirit to enter. And yet how could anything noble or perfect result from this? Or how can the eternal and truly existing essence of the gods be united with ephemeral acts in sacred procedures? Hence, because of these things, such rash men go wholly astray, and are not worthy to be counted among diviners.

**14** Concerning another kind of divination you say the following: “others who retain consciousness in other respects, are inspired according to their imagination, some taking darkness as an accessory, others the ingestion of certain potions, others incantations and formulae of communications.”<sup>207</sup> Some have visions by means of water, others on a wall or in the open air, others

<sup>207</sup> Implying the methodology recorded in the magical papyri and similar catalogues. Cf. VII.5 and our note *ad loc.* on barbarian names.

ὑπαίθρῳ ἀέρι οἱ δ' ἐν ἡλίῳ ἢ ἄλλῳ τινὶ τῶν κατ' οὐρανόν». Πᾶν δὴ καὶ τοῦτο ὃ λέγεις τῆς μαντείας γένος πολυειδὲς ὃν μιᾷ συνείληπται δυνάμει, ἣν ἂν τις φωτὸς ἀγωγὴν ἐπονομάσειεν. Αὕτη δὴ πού τὸ περιεχόμενον τῇ ψυχῇ αἰθερῶδες καὶ ἀγροειδὲς ὄχημα ἐπιλάμπει θείῳ φωτί, ἐξ οὗ δὴ 10 φαντασίαι θεῖαι καταλαμβάνουσι τὴν ἐν ἡμῖν φανταστικὴν δύναμιν, κινούμεναι ὑπὸ τῆς βουλήσεως τῶν θεῶν. Ὅλη γὰρ ἡ ζωὴ τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ πᾶσαι αἱ ἐν αὐτῇ δυνάμεις ὑποκείμεναι τοῖς θεοῖς κινοῦνται, ὅπως ἂν (οἱ) ἡγεμόνες αὐτῆς ἐθέλωσιν.

[133] Καὶ τοῦτο διχῶς γίνεται ἢ παρόντων τῇ ψυχῇ τῶν | θεῶν ἢ προ- 1 δραμόν τι εἰς αὐτὴν φῶς ἀφ' ἑαυτῶν ἐπιλαμπόντων· καθ' ἑκάτερον δὲ τὸν τρόπον χωριστὴ καὶ ἡ θεία παρουσία ἐστὶ καὶ ἡ ἔλλαμψις. Ἡ μὲν οὖν προσοχὴ καὶ διάνοια τῆς ψυχῆς παρακολουθεῖ τοῖς γιγνομένοις, ἐπειδὴ τούτων τὸ θεῖον φῶς οὐκ ἐφάπτεται· ἐπιθειάζει δὲ τὸ φανταστικόν, διό- 5 τι οὐκ ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ, ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν θεῶν ἐγείρεται εἰς τρόπους φαντασιῶν, ἐξηλλαγμένης πάντῃ τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης συνηθείας.

Ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ ἡ τὸ ἐναντίον δεκτικὸν ἐστὶ τοῦ ἐναντίου κατὰ μεταβολὴν καὶ ἔκστασιν ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ, ἡ τὸ συγγενὲς καὶ οἰκεῖον δι' ὁμοιότητα, διὰ ταῦτα δὴ εἰκότως τότε μὲν σκότος συνεργὸν λαμβάνουσιν οἱ φωτα- 10 γωγοῦντες, τότε δὲ ἡλίου φῶς ἢ σελήνης ἢ ὅλως τὴν ὑπαίθριον αὐγὴν συλλαμβανόμενα ἔχουσι πρὸς τὴν ἔλλαμψιν.

Ἐνίστε δὲ καὶ καταστάσεις τινων χρῶνται, ὅσα οἰκεῖα τοῖς θεοῖς ὑπάρχει τοῖς μέλλουσιν ἐπιφέρεισθαι, ἢ καὶ ἐπωδαῖς ἢ συστάσεσι, καὶ αὐ- [134] ταῖς οἰκείαις παρεσκευασμέναις | εἷς τε τὴν παρασκευὴν τῆς ὑποδοχῆς 1 καὶ τὴν παρουσίαν τῶν θεῶν καὶ ἐπιφάνειαν. Ἐνίστε δ' αὖ καὶ δι' ὕδατος ἄγουσι τὸ φῶς, ἐπειδὴ διαφανὲς ὃν τοῦτο εὐφυνῶς διάκειται πρὸς ὑποδοχὴν τοῦ φωτός. Ἄλλοτε δ' εἰς τοῖχον αὐτὸ ποιοῦσιν ἐπιλάμπειν, ταῖς ἱεραῖς τῶν χαρακτήρων καταγραφαῖς προευντρεπίζοντες ἔδραν ἀρίστως εἰς 5 τὸν τοῖχον τῷ φωτί, καὶ ἅμα ἀποστηρίζοντες αὐτὸ ἐνταῦθα ἐν τινὶ στερεῷ

[132].9 δὴ M: δέ V || 13 οἱ add. cj. W || 14 αὐτῆς (ῆ s. v.) cj. W<sup>2</sup>: αὐτοῖς VMW || [133].8 ἐπεὶ VM: ἐπειδὴ cj. B. || 15 οἰκείαις VM: οἰκείως cj. Gale; an αὖ ταῖς οἰκείαις? || [134].4 εἰς cj. Gale: εἰ VM

in the sun or some other celestial body.” All this kind of divination you mention, being of many forms, is encompassed by one power which someone might call “evoking the light.”<sup>208</sup> This somehow illuminates the aether-like and luminous vehicle<sup>209</sup> surrounding the soul with divine light, from which vehicle the divine appearances, set in motion by the gods’ will, take possession of the imaginative power in us. For the entire life of the soul and all the powers in it move subject to the gods, in whatever way its leaders decree.

And this happens in one of two ways: either from the presence of the gods in the soul, or from their shining on it some advanced light. In either case, both the divine presence and its illumination are separate from the soul. The soul’s attention and intellect thus closely follow what is happening, since the divine light does not touch upon these. But the imagination is inspired because it is not roused by itself, but by the gods, to modes of imagination when normal human behaviour has been completely displaced.

Since, however, either the contrary is receptive of its contrary by change and movement outward from itself, or the congenital and kindred because of similarity, in virtue of these principles, those which draw down the light sometimes take darkness as an ally, and sometimes they have as allies the light of the sun and moon, or, in general, the sunlight under the sky, to assist their illumination.

Sometimes they also use conditions of certain objects that are akin to the gods who are about to intervene, or alternatively incantations or communications, which are also akin to and prepared for the gods’ reception, their presence and manifestation. Sometimes, moreover, they also conduct the light through water, since this, being transparent, it is naturally well suited for the light’s reception. At other times they cause it to shine on a wall, having expertly prepared in advance a place on the wall for the light with sacred inscriptions of magical symbols, and at the same

<sup>208</sup> φωτὸς ἀγωγή or φωταγωγή was a way of making higher beings visible through light shining on water (and/or oil) in bowls or cups. On this cf. Damascius, *Hist. phil.* frg. 75F Athanassiadi, and note her comments ad loc. for parallels with *Myst.* II.3.71. For φωταγωγή in the magical tradition see *PGM* IV. 955 and 1103. See also Dodds (1951, 299).

<sup>209</sup> See above on III.11.

χωρίῳ, ὥστε μὴ ἐπὶ πολὺ διαχεῖσθαι.

Γένοιντο δ' ἂν καὶ ἄλλοι πλείονες τρόποι τῆς τοῦ φωτὸς ἀγωγῆς· ἀλλ' ὅμως εἰς ἓν ἀνάγονται πάντες, εἰς τὴν τῆς αὐγῆς ἔλλαμψιν, ὅπουπερ ἂν καὶ δι' οἷων ὀργάνων ἐπιλάμπωσιν. Ἐπειδὴ τοίνυν ἔξωθεν τέ ἐστιν 10 αὕτη καὶ μόνη τῇ βουλήσει καὶ νοήσει τῶν θεῶν ὑπηρετοῦντα κέκτηται τὰ πάντα, τὸ δὲ μέγιστον φῶς ἔχει ἱερὸν καταναγάζον, τὸ μὲν ἄνωθεν ἀπὸ τοῦ αἰθέρος τὸ δ' ἐξ ἁέρος ἢ σελήνης ἢ καὶ ἡλίου καταλάμπον ἢ ἄλλης τινὸς οὐρανίας σφαίρας, φαίνεται ἐκ πάντων τούτων ἀτεξούσιος καὶ πρωτοουργὸς καὶ τῶν θεῶν ἐπάξιος ὁ τοιοῦτος ὢν τρόπος τῆς μαντείας. 15

[135] | 15 Φέρε δὴ οὖν ἐπὶ τὸν διὰ τέχνης ἀνθρωπίνης ἐπιτελούμε- 1 νον τρόπον μετέλθωμεν, ὅστις στοχασμοῦ καὶ οἰήσεως πλείονος εἴληφε· λέγεις δὲ καὶ περὶ τούτου τοιαῦτα· οἱ δ' ἤδη καὶ διὰ σπλάγχνων καὶ δι' ὀρνίθων καὶ δι' ἀστέρων τέχνην συνεστήσαντο τῆς θήρας τοῦ μέλλοντος. Εἰσὶ μὲν καὶ ἄλλαι πλείονες τέχναι τοιαῦται, πλὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐταί γε ἀπο- 5 χρῶσιν ἐνδείξασθαι πᾶν τὸ τεχνικὸν εἶδος τῆς μαντικῆς. Ὡς μὲν οὖν τὸ ὅλον εἰπεῖν, σημείοις τισὶ τοῦτο θεοῖς χρῆται ἐκ θεῶν ἐπιτελουμένοις κατὰ ποικίλους τρόπους. Ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν θείων τεκμηρίων κατὰ τὴν συγγέ- νειαν τῶν πραγμάτων πρὸς τὰ δεικνύμενα σημεῖα συμβάλλει πως ἡ τέχνη καὶ στοχάζεται τὴν μαντείαν, ἐξ εἰκότων τινῶν αὐτὴν συλλογιζομένη. Τὰ 10 μὲν οὖν σημεῖα οἱ θεοὶ ποιοῦσι διὰ τῆς φύσεως τῆς δουλευούσης αὐτοῖς πρὸς τὴν γένεσιν, τῆς τε κοινῆς καὶ τῆς ἰδίας ἐκάστων, ἢ διὰ τῶν γενε- σιουργῶν δαιμόνων οἵτινες τοῖς στοιχείοις τοῦ παντὸς καὶ τοῖς μερικοῖς σώμασι ζώοις τε καὶ τοῖς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ πᾶσιν ἐπιβεβηκότες ἄγουσι τὰ [136] φαινόμενα | μετὰ ῥαστώνης ὀπηπερ ἂν δοκῇ τοῖς θεοῖς. Συμβολικῶς δὲ 1 τὴν γνώμην τοῦ θεοῦ ἐμφαίνουσι, καὶ τὴν τοῦ μέλλοντος προδήλωσιν καθ' Ἡράκλειτον οὔτε λέγοντες οὔτε κρύπτοντες ἀλλὰ σημαίνοντες, ἐπειδὴ τῆς

[134].9 αὐγῆς (γ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: αὐτῆς VM || 15 ὢν τρόπος cj. Gale: ὄν τρόπον VM || [135].5 τοιαῦται V: τοιαῦτα M | αὐταί scripsi: αὐταί VM || 7 τοῦτο (ο s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: τούτῳ VM || 11 αὐτοῖς (οι s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: αὐτῆς VM

time fixing the light on a solid place so that it will not be too diffused.

There might be many other ways for conducting the light, but all are reduced to one, i.e. the shining of the bright light in whatever way and through whatever instruments it may shine forth. Since, then, this light is from without and alone achieves all its effects serving the will and intelligence of the gods, the greatest light has a sacred brightness which, either shining from above in the aether, or from the air, or moon or sun, or any other heavenly sphere, appears apart from all these things to be such a mode of divination that is autonomous, primordial, and worthy of the gods.

**15** Come, then, let us turn to the mode of divination, accomplished by human skill, which partakes largely of guessing and supposition. About this you say the following: "some have already established a technique for pursuing the future by means of entrails, birds, and stars." There are also many other such techniques, but these are sufficient for illustrating every artificial kind of divination.<sup>210</sup> So, then, to speak generally, this kind uses certain divine signs that have been perfected by the gods in various ways. From divine signs, in virtue of the relationship of things to the signs shown, the technique somehow draws conclusions and guesses at the divination, inferring it from certain probabilities. The gods produce the signs either by means of nature, which is subservient to them for the creation of each thing, both universal and particular, or through the agency of daemons concerned with creation, who, presiding over the elements of the universe and individual bodies, indeed over all living beings in the cosmos, guide the phenomena with ease in a manner pleasing to the gods. They reveal through symbols the purpose of the gods, even giving advance notice of the future, "neither talking nor concealing," as Heraclitus says, but "giving indication by signs,"<sup>211</sup> since they

<sup>210</sup> "Abamon" proceeds, in the following chapters, to separate human attempts to divine the future from the methods dictated by the gods, although the distinction is clearer to him than it will ever be to us. Cf. the extraordinary remark in the *Chaldaean Oracles*: "the starry procession has not been brought forth for your sake. The wide-winged flight of birds is never true, nor the cuttings and entrails of sacrificial victims. All these are playthings, the props of commercial fraud" (*Orac. chald.* frg. 107 Des Places, trans. Majercik).

<sup>211</sup> See Heraclitus, frg. 93 D-K.



δημιουργίας τὸν τρόπον ἀποτυποῦσι καὶ διὰ τῆς προδηλώσεως. Καθάπερ  
οὖν δι' εἰκόνων γεννῶσι πάντα, καὶ σημαίνουσιν ὡσαύτως [καὶ] διὰ συν- 5  
θημάτων· ἴσως δὲ καὶ τὴν ἡμετέραν σύνθεσιν ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς ἀφορμῆς εἰς  
ὀξύτητα πλείονα ἀνακινουσιν.

16 Ταυτὶ μὲν οὖν κοινῶς ἡμῖν περὶ τῆς ὅλης ἀνθρωπίνης τοιαύτης  
τέχνης διωρίσθω· κατ' ἰδίαν δὲ τὰ μὲν σπλάγχνα ἣ τε ψυχὴ τῶν ζώων  
καὶ ὁ ἐφεστηκὼς αὐτοῖς δαίμων καὶ ὁ ἀήρ ἣ τε κίνησις τοῦ ἀέρος καὶ 10  
ἡ τοῦ περιέχοντος περιφορὰ μεταβάλλει ποικίλως ὅπηπερ ἂν ἀρέσκη τοῖς  
θεοῖς. Σημεῖον δὲ τὸ πολλάκις εὗρίσκεσθαι αὐτὰ ἀκάρδια ἢ ἄλλως ἄμοιρα  
τῶν κυριωτάτων μερῶν ὧν ἀπεστερημένα οὐχ οἷά τε ἦν ὅλως τοῖς ζώοις  
παρέχειν τὸ ζῆν. Τοὺς δ' ὄρνιθας κινεῖ μὲν καὶ ἡ τῆς ἰδίας ψυχῆς ὁρμή,  
[137] | κινεῖ δὲ καὶ ὁ τῶν ζώων ἐφορος δαίμων, ἥδη δὲ καὶ ἡ τοῦ ἀέρος τροπή 1  
καὶ ἡ καθήκουσα ἀπὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ δύναμις εἰς τὸν ἀέρα· πάντα συμφω-  
νοῦντα τοῖς βουλήμασι τῶν θεῶν ἄγει αὐτὰς ὁμολογουμένως οἷς οἱ θεοὶ  
κατ' ἀρχὰς ἐπιτάττουσιν. Σημεῖον δὲ καὶ τούτον μέγιστον· οὐ γὰρ τῶν  
κατὰ φύσιν τινὶ προσέοικε πράγματι τὸ ἀπορρήσσειν τοὺς ὄρνιθας αὐτοὺς 5  
ἐαυτοὺς καὶ ἀναιρεῖν πολλάκις· ἀλλ' ὑπερφυῆς δὴ τι τὸ ἔργον ἐστὶ τοῦτο,  
ὥς ἑτέρου τινὸς ὄντος τοῦ διὰ τῶν ὄρνιθων ταῦτα ἀπεργαζομένου.

Ἀλλὰ μὴν αἶ γε τῶν ἄστρων φορεαὶ πλησιάζουσι μὲν ταῖς κατ' οὐ-  
ρανὸν αἰδίαις περιφοραῖς, οὐ τόπω μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ ταῖς δυνάμεσι καὶ  
ταῖς τοῦ φωτὸς διαδρομαῖς· κινουῦνται δὲ ὅπηπερ ἂν οἱ κατ' οὐρανὸν θεοὶ 10  
κελεύωσιν. Τὸ γὰρ εὐαγέστατον καὶ ἄκρον τοῦ ἀέρος, ἐπιτηδείως ἔχον  
ἐξάπτεσθαι εἰς πῦρ, ἅμα τε ἐπινεύουσιν οἱ θεοὶ καὶ εὐθὺς ἀνακαίεται.  
Ἐὰν δέ τις καὶ νομίζῃ τῶν οὐρανίων τινὰς ἀπορροίας ἐνδίδοσθαι εἰς τὸν  
ἀέρα, καὶ οὗτος οὐκ ἀλλότρια δοξάσει τῶν δρωμένων ἐν τῇ θείᾳ τέχ-  
[138] νῇ πολλάκις. Καὶ ἡ ἔνωσις δὲ καὶ ἡ συμπάθεια τοῦ παντός | καὶ ἡ ὥς 1  
ἐφ' ἐνὸς ζώον συγκίνησις τῶν πορρωτάτω μερῶν ὥς ἐγγυὲς ὄντων, τὴν  
τῶν σημείων τούτων πομπὴν ἐκ θεῶν ἀνθρώποις καταπέμπει, διὰ τοῦ

[136].5 καὶ σημαίνουσιν ] προσσημαίνουσιν cj. Gale | καὶ<sup>2</sup> del. cj. Gale  
|| 6 σύνθεσιν VM: σύνεσιν cj. Gale || 11 ὅπηπερ M et (πη s. v.) V<sup>c</sup>: ὅπερ V  
|| [137].13 τις (σ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: τι VM

impress, as with a likeness, the manner of creation actually by giving advance notice. Thus even as they create all things by images, so also they signify them in the same way by agreed-upon signs; and perhaps they even awaken our understanding, by the same impulse to a greater acuteness.

**16** Let these, then, be our general definitions concerning this whole variety of the human art.<sup>212</sup> But, in particular, as regards the entrails, the life of living beings, the daemon presiding over them, the air and the movement of air, and the revolution of the surrounding sky transform them<sup>213</sup> in a manner pleasing to the gods. A proof is that they are often found without a heart or without other essential parts, the lack of which makes it impossible for them to grant life to living beings. Birds are moved not only by the impulse of their own particular soul, but also by the guardian daemon of living beings; and furthermore, the circulation of the air and the power descending from the sky to the air, bringing everything into harmony with the gods' purposes, lead them in conformity with what the gods initially command. The greatest sign of this is that it does not seem like some natural occurrence that birds rend and often kill themselves: this is some supernatural deed because that which accomplishes these things through the birds is some other being.<sup>214</sup>

Moreover, the movements of the stars come close to the eternal revolutions of heavenly bodies, not only locally, but also in their powers and emissions of light. They are moved in whatever way the gods in the sky command. For since the purest and highest point of the air is apt for being kindled into fire, at once the gods give a sign and it is immediately kindled.<sup>215</sup> But if someone thinks that certain emanations of heavenly bodies are transmitted to the air, even he will not have conceived anything different from things frequently done in the divine craft. And the union and sympathy of the all and the simultaneous motion, as in a single living being, of parts farthest away as though they were near by, cause the sending down of these signs from the gods to human

<sup>212</sup> That is, of inferior methods of divination.

<sup>213</sup> Namely, the entrails.

<sup>214</sup> Note that all of the above are occurrences that, "Abamon" believes, cannot be explained through natural causes.

<sup>215</sup> "Abamon" is presumably referring to lightning, or perhaps, since this is an account of extraordinary or supernatural phenomena, to shooting stars.

οὐρανοῦ μὲν πρώτως ἔπειτα διὰ τοῦ ἀέρος ἐκφαινομένην τοῖς ἀνθρώποις  
ὡς οἶόν τε μάλιστα λαμπρότατα.

5

Δῆλον δὴ οὖν διὰ πάντων τῶν εἰρημένων καὶ τοῦτο γέγονεν, ὡς  
ὄργανοις μέσοις πολλοῖς οἱ θεοὶ χρώμενοι τὰ σημεῖα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐπι-  
πέμπουσι, δαιμόνων τε ὑπηρεσίαις καὶ ψυχῶν καὶ τῆς φύσεως ὅλης χρώ-  
μενοι πᾶσί τε τοῖς περὶ τὸν κόσμον ἐκείνοις ἀκολουθοῦσι, κατὰ μίαν ἀρχὴν  
ἐξηγούμενοι καὶ ἀνιέντες τὴν ἀπ' αὐτῶν κατιοῦσαν κίνησιν, ὅσηπερ ἂν  
ἐθέλωσιν. Αὐτοὶ δὴ οὖν χωριστοὶ πάντων καὶ ἀπολελυμένοι τῆς σχέσεως  
καὶ συντάξεως τῆς πρὸς τὴν γένεσιν ἄγουσι πάντα ἐν τῇ γενέσει καὶ φύσει  
κατὰ τὴν οἰκείαν βούλησιν. Ἦκει δὴ οὖν εἰς ταῦτο τῷ τῆς δημιουργίας  
καὶ προνοίας τῶν θεῶν λόγῳ καὶ ὁ περὶ τῆς μαντικῆς ἀπολογισμός. Οὐ  
[139] γὰρ καθέλκει οὐδὲ οὗτος | ἐπὶ τὰ τῆδε καὶ πρὸς ἡμᾶς τὸν τῶν κρείττωνων  
νοῦν, μένοντος δ' αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ τὰ τε σημεῖα καὶ τὴν μαντείαν ὅλην πρὸς  
αὐτὸν ἐπιστρέφει καὶ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ προϊόντα αὐτὰ ἀνευρίσκει.

17 Ζητεῖς δὲ τὸ λοιπὸν περὶ τοῦ τρόπου τῆς μαντείας τίς τέ ἐστι  
καὶ ὁποῖος, ὃν ἤδη μὲν ἡμεῖς κοινῇ τε καὶ κατ' ἰδίαν ἐξηγησάμεθα, σὺ  
δὲ πρῶτον μὲν ἀποφαίνῃ γνώμην τῶν μάντεων, ὡς πάντες διὰ θεῶν ἢ  
δαιμόνων φασὶ τοῦ μέλλοντος τυγχάνειν τῆς προγνώσεως, οὐδὲ οἶόν τε  
ἄλλους εἰδέναι αὐτὸ ἢ μόνους τοὺς τῶν ἐσομένων κυρίους. Ἐπειτα ἀπο-  
ρεῖς εἰ ἄχρι τοσούτου κατάγεται εἰς ὑπηρεσίαν ἀνθρώπων τὸ θεῖον ὡς μὴ  
ὀκνεῖν τινὰς καὶ ἀλφειτομάντεις εἶναι. Τὸ δὲ οὐ καλῶς ὑπολαμβάνεις, τὴν  
περιουσίαν τῆς δυνάμεως τῶν θεῶν καὶ τὴν ὑπερβάλλουσαν ἀγαθότητα  
καὶ τὴν πάντα περιέχουσαν αἰτίαν κηδεμονίαν τε ἡμῶν καὶ προστασίαν  
ὑπηρεσίαν ἐπονομάζων. Καὶ ἔτι ἀγνοεῖς τὸν τρόπον τῆς ἐνεργείας, ὥστε  
[140] οὐ καθέλκεται οὔτε ἐπιστρέφεται οὗτος εἰς ἡμᾶς, χωριστὸς δὲ | προη-  
γεῖται καὶ δίδωσι μὲν τοῖς μετέχουσιν ἑαυτόν, αὐτὸς δὲ οὔτε ἐξίσταται  
ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ οὔτε ἐλάττων γίγνεται οὔθ' ὑπηρετεῖ τοῖς μετέχουσιν, ἀλλὰ  
τοῦναντίον πᾶσιν ὑπηρετοῦσι προσχρῆται.

Δοκεῖ δέ μοι καὶ ἄλλο διαμαρτάνειν ἢ παροῦσα ἐπίστασις· ὡς γὰρ  
ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων ὑποθεμένη τῶν θεῶν τὰ ἔργα, οὕτω διαμφισβητεῖ περὶ

[138].4 ἐκφαινομένην V: ἐκφαινομένου M || 10 ἐξηγούμενοι (τ p. n., γ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: ἐξηγούμενοι VM || 11 καὶ M et s. v. V<sup>2</sup>: om. V || [139].2 αὐτῷ scripsi: αὐτῷ V αὐτῷ (sine spir.) M || 4 τὸ V: om. M

beings, first through the heaven and then through the air, with the greatest possible brightness.

Indeed, this becomes clear from everything said, namely, that the gods, through the use of many intermediate instruments, send forth signs to human beings, using not only the services of daemons, but also those of souls and of all nature and all things in the cosmos which obey these, guiding them according to a single principle, and allowing their own motion to proceed from them in whatever way they wish. Indeed, then, while being transcendent over all things and free from every relationship and co-ordination with those in the realm of becoming, they lead everything in the realm of generation and nature in accordance with their own will. In this way, then, this explanation of divination concords with the account of the creative activity and foreknowledge of the gods. For it does not drag down the intellect of the supreme beings into this world and to us, but while this remains stable in itself, it refers back to it the signs and all divination, and reveals them as proceeding from it.

**17** But you seek further concerning “the manner of divination, what it is and what kind of thing it is,” which we have already explained, both in general and in particular. And initially you declare the attitude of the diviners, “how all say that they attain foreknowledge of the future through gods or daemons, and that it is impossible for others to know it, or only for those who are masters over the future.” Then you raise the question whether the divine is brought down for the service of human beings, to the extent that it does not hesitate even to take on the role of those who divine with barley meal. But you don’t properly understand what you call “service” when applying this word to the overwhelming power of the gods, and their superabundant goodness, and their all-encompassing responsibility, their care and patronage. Moreover, you ignore the manner of their activity, that this is neither drawn down nor turned toward us, but, being transcendent, it guides and gives itself to its participants; and is neither altered in itself nor made less, nor is it subservient to its participants, but, on the contrary, it makes use of all that is subservient to it.

The present objection seems to me to go astray in another direction: in gauging the gods’ work by those of humans, there thus arises a problem as to how these works come to be. Because

αὐτῶν πῶς γίγνεται. Διότι γὰρ ἡμεῖς ἐπιστρεφόμενοι καὶ τοῖς πάθεσιν ἐνίοτε προσκείμενοι τοῖς διοικουμένοις ἐπιμελούμεθα αὐτῶν, διὰ τοῦτο κακῶς εἰκάζει καὶ τὴν τῶν θεῶν δύναμιν ὑπηρετικὴν εἶναι τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτῶν κατευθυνομένοις· ἡ δ' οὔτε ἐν τῇ ποιήσει τῶν κόσμων οὔτε ἐν τῇ 10 προνοίᾳ τῆς γενέσεως οὔτε ἐν τῇ περὶ αὐτῆς μαντεία καθέλκεται ποτε εἰς τὰ μετέχοντα, ἀλλὰ μεταδίδωσι μὲν πᾶσι τῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ παραπλήσια πρὸς ἑαυτὴν τὰ ὅλα ἀπεργάζεται, ὠφελεῖ τε τὰ διοικούμενα ἀφθόνως, μένει δὲ ὡς πολὺ μᾶλλον ἢ ἐαυτῆς τοσούτῳ μᾶλλον τῆς οἰκείας τελειότητος 15 πεπληρωται. Καὶ αὕτη μὲν οὐ γίγνεται τῶν μετεχόντων, τὰ δὲ μεταλαμβάνοντα ἴδια ἑαυτῆς ἀπεργάζεται καὶ σώζει μὲν αὐτὰ παντελῶς, | μένει 1 [141] δὲ ἐν ἑαυτῇ τελεία καὶ συλλαμβάνει μὲν αὐτὰ ἅμα ἐν ἑαυτῇ, ὑπ' οὐδενός γε μὴν ἐκεῖνων οὔτε κρατεῖται οὔτε περιέχεται.

Μάτην οὖν ἡ τοιαύτη ὑπόνοια παρενοχλεῖ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις. Οὐδὲ γὰρ μερίζεται ὁ θεὸς παρὰ τοὺς διηρημένους τρόπους τῆς μαντείας, ἀλλ' 5 ἀμερίστως ἅπαντας ἀπεργάζεται· οὐδὲ κατὰ χρόνον διηρημένως ἄλλοτε ἄλλους ἐπιτελεῖ, ἀλλ' ἀθρόως καὶ ἅμα δημιουργεῖ πάντα κατὰ μίαν ἐπιβολήν· οὐδὲ περὶ τὰ σημεῖα κατέχεται περιειλημμένος ἐν αὐτοῖς ἢ διωρισμένος, ἀλλ' ἐν ἑαυτῷ καὶ τὰ σημεῖα συνέχει, συνείληφέ τε αὐτὰ ἐν ἐνὶ καὶ προάγει κατὰ μίαν βούλησιν ἂν ἐαυτοῦ. 10

Εἰ δὲ καὶ ἄχρι τῶν ἀψύχων οἷον ψηφιδίων ἢ ῥάβδων ἢ ξύλων τινῶν ἢ λίθων ἢ πυρῶν ἢ ἀλφίτων διήκει τῇ προδηλώσει, αὐτὸ τοῦτο καὶ τὸ θαυμασιωτάτον ἐστὶ τῆς θείας μαντικῆς προσημασίας, διότι καὶ τοῖς 1 [142] ἀψύχοις ψυχὴν καὶ τοῖς ἀκινήτοις κίνησιν ἐνδίδωσι, ποιεῖ τε πάντα | σαφῇ 1 καὶ γνώριμα καὶ λόγον μετέχοντα καὶ ἀφωρισμένα τοῖς τῆς νοήσεως μέτροις, καίτοι μηδὲνα λόγον ἔχοντα ἂν ἐαυτῶν. Καὶ ἄλλο δὴ τί μοι δοκεῖ δαιμόνιον τι θαῦμα ὁ θεὸς ἐν τούτοις διασημαίνει. Ὡσπερ γὰρ ἐνίοτε τῶν ἐνθιτικῶν τινα ἀνθρώπων ποιεῖ σοφίας μετὰ λόγους ἀποφθέγγεσθαι, δι' 5 οὗ πᾶσι κατάδηλον γίγνεται, ὥς οὐκ ἀνθρώπειόν τι, θεῖον δὲ τὸ ἔργον ἐστὶ

[140].11 τῆς M: om. V | καθέλκεται scr. B: καθέλκεται (κ s. v.) V καθέλκεται VM || 14 ὡς s. v. V<sup>2</sup>: om. VM || [141].4 μάτην M et (pr. v p. n.) V<sup>c</sup>: μάντην V || 11 ψηφιδίων M: ψηφίδων V || [142].5 μετὰ λόγους scripsi: μετὰ λόγου VM

we are turned towards our objects, and are sometimes emotionally attached when we give heed to them; on account of this, we wrongly infer that the gods' power is subservient to those guided by them. But neither in the creation of ordered worlds, nor in the providence governing the realm of becoming, nor in respect of divination, is the divine power ever drawn down to its participants, but it shares its goods with all, and fashions all things in likeness to itself; it assists without envy those things controlled by it, and the more it remains by itself, the more it is filled by its own perfection. And this does not happen from those participating in it, but it fashions its participants as its own and preserves them wholly. It remains complete in itself, subsumes them at the same time into itself, and is certainly not ruled or encompassed by any of them.

To no purpose, then, are human beings bothered by such a suspicion. For the god does not suffer division in consequence of the diverse modes of divining, but without division produces them all. Nor is it in accordance with time that he brings to completion different things in different ways, but he fashions them all together at once, and according to one intuition. Nor is he held fast in his signs, either encompassed or limited by them, but he contains in himself all the signs, and comprehends them as one, and brings them forth from himself according to a single purpose.

But if this divine power extends in its predictions to inanimate objects, such as little pebbles, rods, or certain woods, stones, wheat, and barley meal,<sup>216</sup> this is itself the most astonishing prognostication by divine divination, because it gives life to inanimate things and motion to things motionless, and makes all clear, knowledgeable, and participating in reason, and definable according to the measures of intelligence, and yet having no reason in themselves. And there is indeed another divine wonder, it seems to me, that the god indicates by these means. For just as he makes some simple-minded human being utter statements full of wisdom,<sup>217</sup> by which it becomes clear to all that this is not some

<sup>216</sup> See also V.23.233. Such inanimate objects were commonly used in theurgic practice as vessels for divine action. Cf. Proclus, *Comm. Tim.* 1.213.16–18; Proclus as reported in *CMAG* 6:150.28–30.

<sup>217</sup> The simplicity of the inspired was a long-held tradition in antiquity; see Euripides, *Ion* 1323; Plato, *Ion* 534d–e; *Phaedr.* 244b; Apuleius, *Apol.* 43; Aelius Aristides, *Or.* 45.11; Maximus of Tyre, 8.1b; Tacitus, *Ann.* 2.54.2–3.

τὸ γεγονός, οὕτωςι διὰ τῶν ἀπεστερημένων γνώσεως τὰ πάσης γνώσεως  
 προέχοντα νοήματα ἀποκαλύπτει· κἀκεῖνο ἅμα ἀναφαίνει τοῖς ἀνθρώποις  
 ὡς πίστεως ἄξια ὑπάρχει τὰ δεικνύμενα σημεῖα, καὶ ὅτι κρείττονά ἐστι  
 τῆς φύσεως καὶ ἐξηρημένος ἀπ' αὐτῆς ὁ θεός· οὕτω τὰ ἐν τῇ φύσει ἄγνω- 10  
 στα γνωστὰ ποιεῖ καὶ τὰ μὴ γιγνώσκοντα γιγνώσκοντα, ἡμῖν τε δι' αὐτῶν  
 ἐντίθησι φρόνησιν, καὶ δι' ὅλων τῶν ὄντων ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ κινεῖ τὸν νοῦν  
 ἡμῶν ἐπὶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν τῶν τε ὄντων καὶ γεγονότων καὶ ἐσομένων.

Οἶμαι δὴ οὖν καὶ ἀπὸ τούτων τὸν τρόπον τῆς μαντικῆς γεγονέ-  
 [143] ναι καταφανῆ, παντελῶς ὑπενάντιον ὄντα οἷς | ὑφορᾷ σὺν καὶ ὑποπτεύεις. 1  
 Ἡγεμονικός γάρ ἐστι καὶ πρωτοργὸς αὐτεξούσιός τε καὶ ὑπερέχων συν-  
 ειληφώς τε ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὰ ὅλα ἄλλ' οὐκ αὐτὸς περιεχόμενος ὑπὸ τινων οὐδὲ  
 διειργόμενος ὑπὸ τῶν μεταλαμβάνοντων, ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ἀθρόως καὶ ἀδιορί-  
 στως πᾶσιν ἐπιβεβηκώς καὶ ἐνεξουσιάζων, ἀδιορίστῳ δὲ δυνάμει ἐπικρα- 5  
 τῶν τὰ ὅλα καὶ διασημαίνων ἀθρόως. Ἀφ' ὧν δὴ διαλύσεις ῥαδίως τὰς  
 ἰδιωτικὰς ταύτας καὶ παρενοχλούσας τοῖς πολλοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἀπορίας,  
 ἐπὶ δὲ τὴν νοερὰν καὶ θείαν καὶ ἄφενστον ἀπὸ πάντων προσημασίαν τῶν  
 θεῶν ἑαυτὸν ἐπανάξεις δεόντως.

18 Ὅτι μὲν οὖν οὐ κατάγεται τὸ θεῖον εἰς τὰ σημεῖα τῆς μαντικῆς 10  
 διὰ τούτων ἡγωνισάμεθα· δέχεται δ' ἡμᾶς ἄγων ἐξ ἁγῶνος ἑτερος, οὐκ  
 ἐλάττων τοῦ ἥδη προανυσθέντος, ὃν ἐπάγεις εὐθὺς περὶ τῶν αἰτίων τῆς  
 μαντικῆς, εἰ θεὸς ἢ ἄγγελος ἢ δαίμων ἢ ὅστισοῦν πάρεστι ταῖς ἐπιφανείαις  
 ἢ μαντείαις ἢ ταῖς ὁποιασοῦν ἱεραῖς ἐνεργείαις. Πρὸς δὴ τοῦτο ἀπλοῦς  
 [144] ἐστὶν ὁ παρ' ἡμῶν λόγος, | ὥς οὐχ οἷόν τε τῶν θείων ἔργων δοῦσθαι 1  
 ἱεροπρεπῶς ἄνευ τοῦ παρεῖναι τινα τῶν κρείττονων ἔφορον καὶ ἀποπλη-  
 ρωτὴν τῆς ἱερᾶς ἐνεργείας· ἀλλ' ὅπου μὲν τέλεια τὰ κατορθώματά ἐστι  
 καὶ αὐταρκῆ καὶ ἀνενδεῆ, θεοὶ τούτων εἰσὶν ἡγεμόνες, ὅπου δὲ μέσα καὶ

[142].11 τε M et (περὶ p. n.) s. v. V<sup>2</sup>: περὶ V || 13 γεγονότων V: γενο-  
 μένων M || [143].1 ὑφορᾷ VM: ὑφορᾷς cj. U || 5 ἀδιορίστῳ M: ἀδιορίστως  
 V || 9 δεόντως M et (σ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: δεόντων V || [144].1 τε VM: τέ τι (τι s.  
 v.) V<sup>2</sup>

human but a divine accomplishment, so through beings deprived of knowledge he reveals thoughts which surpass all knowledge. At the same time, the god manifests to humans that the signs shown are worthy of credence, and that they are superior to nature, and that the god is exalted above it. So he makes things unknown in nature known; things not knowledgeable he makes knowledgeable, and through these he implants wisdom in us, and by means of all beings in the cosmos he moves our mind to the truth of things that are, have been, and will be.

Indeed, I think that from these considerations the manner of divination has become absolutely clear, wholly opposed to those of which you have a glimpse and an inkling. For it is sovereign and primordial, both self-governing and prevailing, encompassing all things in itself, but itself neither encompassed by some things nor constrained by its participants. And it presides in itself over all, and exercises its power<sup>218</sup> over all and without distinction, ruling over the universe with unlimited power and giving forth signs all at once. From these observations you will indeed easily resolve those difficulties of yours, both peculiar and bothersome to many human beings, and you will raise yourself suitably to the intelligible, divine and infallible prognostic of the gods.

**18** Thus we have contended by these arguments that the divine is not brought down to the signs of divination. But another contest awaits us no less than that already won which you introduce directly concerning the causes of divination: "whether it is a god or an angel, or daemon, or some other such being who is present at the epiphanies, at the divinations, or at any of the sacred actions." In response to this, our argument is simple: divine works cannot be accomplished with due propriety without some presence of superior beings, beholding and contemplating the sacred action;<sup>219</sup> but whenever the things done rightly are complete, self-sufficient, and without defect, the gods are their leaders; and whenever they are (only) middling, and fall somewhat short of

Olympiodorus, *Comm. Alc.* 8.12; *PGM* IV. 850-929; Eunapius, *Vit. soph.* 504; cf. also Seneca, *Ep.* 41.4-5; 2 Cor 4:7. Plutarch, *Pyth. or.* 405c tells us that the current Pythia was the daughter of a poor farmer and a simple girl. Cf. also Aristotle, *Eth. eud.* 1247b-1248a.

<sup>218</sup> ἐνεξουσιάζειν, cf. Iamblichus, *Comm. Tim.* frg. 50.

<sup>219</sup> That is, the process of theurgy.



βραχύ τι τῶν ἄκρων ἀπολειπόμενα ἀγγέλους ἔχει τοὺς ἐπιτελοῦντας αὐτὰ 5  
καὶ ἀποδεικνύοντας, τὰ δ' ἔσχατα δαίμοσι διαπράττεσθαι ἀπονενέμνται·  
πάντα γε μὴν ἐνὶ γέ τινι τῶν κρείττωνων ἐπιτέτραπται τῶν θεοπρεπῶν  
πράξεων ἢ κατόρθωσις· ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ λόγον περὶ θεῶν ἄνευ θεῶν λαβεῖν δυ-  
νατόν, μήτοι γε δὴ ἰσόθεα ἔργα καὶ πᾶσαν πρόγνωσιν ἄνευ θεῶν τις ἂν  
ἐπιτηδεύσειεν. Τὸ γὰρ ἀνθρώπειον φῦλον ἀσθενές ἐστὶ καὶ σμικρόν, βλέ- 10  
πει τε ἐπὶ βραχύ, σύμφυτόν τε οὐδένειαν κέκτηται· μία δ' ἐστὶν ἐν αὐτῷ  
τῆς ἐνυπαρχούσης πλάνης καὶ ταραχῆς καὶ τῆς ἀστάτου μεταβολῆς ἰα-  
τρεία, εἴ τινα μετουσίαν θείου φωτός κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν μεταλάβοι· ὁ δὲ  
ταύτην ἀποκλείων ταῦτόν ποιεῖ τοῖς ἐξ ἀψύχων ψυχὴν παράγουσιν ἢ τοῖς  
[145] ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνοήτων νοῦν ἀπογεννώσι· | καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἀπὸ τῶν μὴ θείων 1  
τὰ θεῖα ἔργα ἀναιτίως ὑφίστησιν.

Τὸ μὲν οὖν θεὸν ἢ δαίμονα ἢ ἄγγελον εἶναι τὸν ἀποτελοῦντα τὰ  
κρείττονα ἔργα συγχωρήσειεν ἂν τις· οὐ μὴν ἔτι γε δίδομεν ὃ σὺ προσ- 5  
έροισας ὡς ὁμολογούμενον, ὅτι δι' ἡμῶν ἐλκόμενος ἀνάγκαις ταῖς τῆς  
κλήσεως ταῦτα ἐπιτελεῖ. Κρείττων γὰρ ἀνάγκης ἐστὶν ὁ θεὸς καὶ πᾶς ὁ  
συναπτόμενος αὐτῷ τῶν κρείττωνων χορὸς, οὐ τῆς ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἐπαγο-  
μένης μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅση τὸν κόσμον κατέληφεν· διότι δὴ τὴν αὐλον  
φύσιν καὶ μηδεμίαν παραδεχομένην ἐπίκτητον τάξιν οὐκ ἔνεστι δουλεύειν  
οὐδεμιᾷ ἀλλαχόθεν ἐπεισιούσῃ ἀνάγκῃ. Εἴτα μέντοι καὶ ἡ κλήσις καὶ τὰ 10  
δρῶμενα ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐπιστήμονος τῇ ἐξομοιώσει καὶ τῇ οἰκειώσει προστρέ-  
χει τοῖς κρείττοσιν αὐτὰ καὶ συνάπτεται, ἀλλ' οὐχὶ διὰ βίας ἀπεργάζεται  
τὴν ἐαυτῶν ἐνέργειαν.

Οὐ τοίνυν, ὡς σὺ νερόμικας, παθόντος τοῦ ἐπιστήμονος θεουργοῦ  
[146] τὰ γινόμενα ὁρᾷται εἰς τοὺς θεσπίζον|τας, οὐδὲ πάθους προηγησαμένου 1  
εἰς τὸν χρησμοδοῦντα διὰ τῆς ἀνάγκης οὕτως ἐπιτελεῖται ἡ μαντεία· ἁλ-  
λότρια γὰρ ταῦτα τῆς τῶν κρείττωνων οὐσίας καὶ πρὸς ἄλλα ἀνάρμοστα  
ὑπάρχει.

[144].9 μήτοι M: μήτι V || [145].14 ὡς V: καὶ M ὡς καὶ (καὶ add. s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || [146].3 ἀνάρμοστα VM: ἐνάρμοστα (ε s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>

the best, they have angels for their accomplishment and manifestation; and the last or lowest works are assigned to the daemons for their accomplishment. At any rate, in all actions concerning the gods, their successful performance is entrusted to some superior being. After all, since it is impossible to gain even theoretical knowledge of the gods without the gods, still less would someone be able to accomplish god-like deeds and have total foreknowledge without the gods. For the human race is feeble and puny, it sees but a little ahead, and is endowed with a congenital futility. But there is one remedy for its inherent straying, confusion, and unstable changing, and that is, if it participate so far as possible in some portion of the divine light. But whoever excludes this, does the same thing as they who produce a soul from things without a soul, or who would generate a mind from things mindless; for such a person postulates divine works without a cause from things not divine.

So, then, one might concur that it is a god or a daemon or an angel that brings superior works to completion; and yet we do not accept what you toss in as if agreed upon, that "it is through being drawn down to us by the necessities of our invocation that the superior being accomplishes these things." For the god is superior to necessity, and the whole chorus of superior beings attached to it is superior to necessity, not only that imposed by human beings, but also from the necessity which embraces the cosmos. Hence, it is not possible for the immaterial nature that has not received into itself any external ranking, to do service to any necessity coming from elsewhere. So then, the invocation and rites performed by the expert ascend to the superior beings and attach themselves to them by assimilation and appropriation, but not through force do they achieve their own activity.

It is thus not as you suppose, i.e. that it is through the theurgic adept being affected that the things happening are seen in those prophesying, nor it is that when this action is imposed upon the oracle-giver that divination is thus accomplished by necessity. For these things are foreign to the essence of superior beings, and suited rather to other things.<sup>220</sup>

<sup>220</sup> Reading *ἐνάρμοστα* with Ficino for *ἀνάρμοστα* of the MSS.

19 Ἄλλ' οὐδὲ ὡς ὄργανόν τι μέσον ἐστὶ τὸ τῶν κρείττωνων αἴτιον 5  
καὶ δοῖα διὰ τοῦ θεσπίζοντος ὁ καλῶν. Καὶ γὰρ ταῦτα ἀνόσιον φθέγγε-  
σθαι· πολλὸν γὰρ τοῦδε μᾶλλον ἐστὶν ἀληθὲς ἐκεῖνο ὡς θεὸς μὲν πάντα  
ἐστὶ καὶ πάντα δύναιται καὶ πάντα πεπλήρωκεν ἑαυτοῦ, καὶ μόνος σπου-  
δῆς ἀξιολόγου καὶ τιμῆς μακαρίας ἐστὶν ἄξιος· τὸ δ' ἀνθρώπειον αἰσχροὺν  
καὶ ἐν οὐδενὸς μέρει καὶ παίγνιόν ἐστι πρὸς τὸ θεῖον παραβαλλόμενον. 10  
Γελῶ δ' ἔγωγε καὶ τοῦτο ἀκούων, ὡς αὐτόματός τιςιν ὁ θεὸς πάρεστιν  
ἦτοι διὰ γενέσεως περίοδον ἢ δι' ἄλλας αἰτίας. Οὐ γὰρ ἔτ' ἔσται τὸ ἀγέν-  
νητον τὸ κρεῖττον, εἰ ἢ περίοδος αὐτὸ ἄγει τῆς γενέσεως, οὐδὲ πρῶτως  
αἴτιον τῶν ὄλων, εἰ κατ' ἄλλας αἰτίας καὶ αὐτὸ τισι συντάττεται. Ταῦτα  
μὲν οὖν ἀνάξια καὶ τῆς περὶ θεῶν ἐννοίας ὑπάρχει καὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ θεουργίᾳ 15  
[147] γιγνομένων ἔργων ἀλ|λότρια· πέπονθε δὲ ἡ τοιαύτη ζήτησις ταῦτόν ὅπερ 1  
καὶ περὶ τῆς δημιουργίας τοῦ παντός καὶ τῆς προνοίας οἱ πολλοὶ πάσχου-  
σιν· μὴ δυνάμενοι γὰρ μαθεῖν ὅστις ὁ τρόπος αὐτῶν, τὰς τε ἀνθρώπων  
φροντίδας καὶ τοὺς λογισμοὺς ἐπὶ τῶν θεῶν ἀποκρίνοντες, καὶ τὸ ὅλον  
ἀναιροῦσιν ἐπ' αὐτῶν τὴν πρόνοιάν τε καὶ δημιουργίαν. Ὡσπερ οὖν πρὸς 5  
τούτους ἀπαντᾶν εἰώθαμεν ὡς ἄλλος τις τρόπος ἐστὶν ὁ θεῖος τῆς ποιή-  
σεως καὶ κηδεμονίας, οὗ δὴ δι' ἄγνοιαν οὐ χρὴ τὸ πᾶν ἀποδοκιμάζειν ὡς  
οὐδὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν ὑφεστήκοι, οὕτω καὶ πρὸς σὲ ἄν τις δικαιολογήσαιο ὡς  
πρόγνωσις πᾶσα καὶ ἔργων αἰδίων προᾶξις θεῶν μὲν ἐστὶν ἔργα, οὔτε δὲ δι'  
ἀνάγκης οὔτε δι' ἄλλας ἀνθρωπίνας αἰτίας ἐπιτελεῖται, ἀλλὰ διὰ τοιαύτας 10  
ὁποίας οἱ θεοὶ μόνοι γινώσκουσιν.

20 Ἄρ' οὖν ἐφέμενοι τούτων εὐλόγως ἂν τὴν δευτέραν παρὰ σοὶ  
[148] τιθεμένην αἰτιολογίαν περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν ἀπο|δεξαίμεθα ὡς ἡ ψυχὴ ταῦτα 1  
λέγει τε καὶ φαντάζεται, καὶ ἔστι ταύτης πάθη ἐκ μικρῶν αἰδηγμάτων  
ἐγειρόμενα· ἀλλ' οὔτε ἔχει φύσιν ταῦτα οὔτε ὁ λόγος αἰρεῖ ὥδι ὑπολαμβά-  
νειν· πᾶν μὲν γὰρ τὸ γιγνόμενον ὑπ' αἰτίου τινὸς γίγνεται, καὶ τὸ συγγενές

[146].8-9 σπουδῆς VM: οὔτος σπουδῆς (οὔτος add. s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 9  
ἀξιολόγου cj. Gale: ἄξιος λόγου M ἄξιας λόγου (acc. mut., alt. α ex ο) M<sup>c</sup> ἄξιας  
λόγος V ἄξιος λόγος (pr. ο ex α) V<sup>2</sup> ἄξίως λόγου cj. B || 12 pr. τὸ VM: p. n.  
V<sup>2</sup> || 13 αὐτὸ V: αὐτὸς M || 15 περὶ cj. i. m. B<sup>4</sup>: παρὰ VM || [147].8  
δικαιολογήσαιο cj. B.: δικαιολογίσαιο VM || 12 ἐφέμενοι VM: ἀφιέμενοι cj.  
Gale || 13-[148].1 -δεξαίμεθα scripsi: -δειξαίμεθα VM

**19** But the causality of the superior beings is not even like some intermediate instrument, nor (can it be said) that the one invoking acts through the one prophesying. Indeed to assert these things is impious. For it is much more true that god is all, and has power over all, and all things have been filled by his own self, and he alone is worthy of highest esteem and of blessed honour. But the human being is shameful, and is as nothing, and a toy compared with the divine.<sup>221</sup> And I even laugh hearing this: that the god is spontaneously present to some whether by reason of the cycle of creation or through some other causes. For the superior being will no longer be unbegotten if it is the cycle of generation that brings it, nor will it be the primordial cause of everything if itself be co-ordinated with some things by reason of other causes. These statements are thus unworthy both of thought about the gods, and are alien to what is accomplished in theurgy. But such a line of inquiry falls into the same error that the many also experience concerning the creation of the universe and of providence. For not being able to learn what their nature is, and excluding any concern for human beings and or thought about them when dealing with the gods, they remove from them all providential care and creativeness. In the same way, then, as we are accustomed to meet these arguments by declaring that the divine mode of creation and guardianship is quite different, and that we should not, just because of our ignorance, reject it entirely as not even existing from the beginning, so likewise, in response to you, one may reasonably advance the view that all foreknowledge and execution of eternal works are divine works, not accomplished by necessity or by other human causes, but by reason of such as the gods alone know.

**20** Passing on from these points, then, may we reasonably accept the second explanation advanced by you concerning these matters, that “the soul both speaks and imagines these things, and that they are conditions of it which have been produced by small sparks?”<sup>222</sup> But neither is this according to nature, nor is it reasonable to understand the situation in this way. For everything that happens arises from a specific cause, and what is

<sup>221</sup> On the human being as a “toy,” see Plato, *Leg.* 1.644d–e; 8.804b; Plotinus, *Enn.* 3.2.15.

<sup>222</sup> For *μικρὰ αἰθύγματα* cf. III.21.150.15 below, and cf. perhaps Plato, *Leg.* 3.677b2.

ὑπὸ τοῦ συγγενοῦς ἀποτελεῖται, τὸ δὲ θεῖον ἔργον οὔτε αὐτόματόν ἐστιν 5  
(ἀναίτιον γὰρ τὸ τοιοῦτον καὶ οὐ πάντως τεταγμένον), οὔτε ἀπ' ἀνθρω-  
πίνης αἰτίας ἀπογεννᾶται· ἀλλότριον γὰρ καὶ τοῦτο καὶ ὑποδεέστερον, τὸ  
δὲ τελειότερον ὑπὸ τοῦ ἀτελοῦς οὐκ ἔχει δύναμιν παράγεσθαι. Πάντα ἄρα  
ἀπὸ θείας αἰτίας ἀποβλαστάνει τὰ προσόμοια αὐτῇ ἔργα φνόμενα. Ἡ γὰρ  
ἀνθρωπίνη ψυχὴ κατέχεται ὑφ' ἐνὸς εἶδους καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ σώματος παντα- 10  
χόθεν ἐπισκοτεῖται· ὅπερ εἴτε Ἀμέλητα ποταμὸν εἴτε Λήθης ὕδωρ εἴτε  
ἄγνοιαν καὶ παραφροσύνην εἴτε διὰ παθῶν δεσμὸν εἴτε ζωῆς στέρησιν εἴτε  
ἄλλο τι τῶν κακῶν ἐπονομάσειεν, οὐκ ἂν τις ἐπαξίως εὖροι τὴν ἀτοπίαν  
[149] αὐτοῦ προσονομάσαι. Πότε οὖν ὑπὸ τοιούτου εἰργμοῦ | κατεχομένη ἱκανή 1  
ποτε ἂν γένοιτο πρὸς τὴν τοιαύτην ἐνέργειαν, οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδαμῶς τοῦτο  
εὐλογον ὑπολαμβάνειν.

Εἰ γὰρ πού τι καὶ δοκοῦμεν εἶναι δυνατοὶ ποιεῖν τῷ μετέχειν καὶ  
καταλάμπεσθαι ὑπὸ τῶν θεῶν, τούτῳ μόνῳ καὶ τῆς θείας ἐνεργείας ἀπο- 5  
λαύομεν. Διὰ τοῦτο οὐχ ἡ τὴν οἰκείαν ἔχουσα ἀρετὴν καὶ φρόνησιν ψυχὴ,  
αὕτη καὶ τῶν θεῶν ἔργων μετέχει· καίτοι εἰ ψυχῆς ἦν τὰ τοιαῦτα ἔργα,  
ἢ πᾶσα ἂν αὐτὰ ψυχὴ ἀπειργάζετο, ἢ μόνη ἡ τὴν οἰκείαν ἔχουσα τελειό-  
τητα· νῦν δὲ οὐδετέρα αὐτῶν ἱκανῶς εἰς τοῦτο παρεσκεύασται· ἀλλὰ καὶ  
ἡ τελεία ὥς πρὸς τὴν θεῖαν ἐνέργειάν ἐστιν ἀτελής. Ἄλλη ἄρα ἡ θεουργ- 10  
γός ἐστιν ἐνέργεια, καὶ παρὰ μόνων θεῶν ἡ τῶν θεῶν ἔργων ἐνδίδοται  
κατόρθωσις, ἐπεὶ οὐδ' ἐχρῆν ὅλως τῇ θεραπείᾳ τῶν θεῶν χρῆσθαι, ἀλλὰ  
τούτῳ γε τῷ λόγῳ ἄνευ τῆς θρησκείας παρ' ἑαυτῶν ἂν ἡμῖν ὑπῆρξε τὰ  
θεῖα ἀγαθὰ. Εἰ δὲ ταῦτα μανιώδη τὰ δοξάσματά ἐστι καὶ ἀνόητα, ἀφίστα-  
[150] σθαι χρὴ καὶ τῆς τοιαύτης ὑπονοίας, ὥς αἰτίαν | παρεχομένης ἀξιόλογον 1  
πρὸς τὴν τῶν θεῶν ἔργων ἀποπλήρωσιν.

**21** Μήποτε οὖν ὁ τρίτον προσέθηκας ἐστιν ἀληθέστερον, ὥς ἄρα  
μικτόν τι γίνεταί ὑποστάσεως εἶδος ἐξ ἡμῶν τε τῆς ψυχῆς καὶ ἔξωθεν  
θείας ἐπιπνοίας. Ὅρα δὴ οὖν αὐτὸ ἀκριβέστερον, μὴ ποι λάθωμεν παρ' 5  
αὐτοῦ παραποδισθέντες καὶ τῆς ἐν αὐτῷ φαινομένης εὐπρεπείας. Εἰ γὰρ  
πού τι ἐκ δυοῖν ἐν ἀποτελοῖτο, ὁμοειδές τοῦτο καὶ ὁμοφυές πᾶν ἐστι καὶ

[148].5 ἐστιν cj. Gale: ἔσται VM || 10 κατέχεται cj. Gale: καταδέχεται  
VM || 14 εἰργμοῦ VM: εἰρμοῦ cj. B || [149].4 μετέχειν M et (tert. e p. n., ei  
s. v.) V<sup>t</sup>: μετέχεν V || 10 ἀτελής M et (η supra alt. ε) V<sup>2</sup>: ἀτελής V || 13 γε  
V: om. M || 14-15 ἀφίστασθαι cj. B<sup>5</sup>: ἀφιστάναι (acc. et ναί s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> ἀφιστα  
V ἀφι... M (lac. 3 ll.)

kindred is produced by that which is kindred, but the divine work is neither accidental (for such is without a cause, and not at all ordered) nor is it produced by a human cause. For this is alien to it, and subordinate; and that which is more perfect has no ability to be produced by that which is imperfect. All things, then, that spring from a divine cause are works that are naturally akin to it. For the human soul is held fast by a single form, and is obscured by the body on every side; and this condition, whether it be called the river of Forgetfulness or the water of Lethe,<sup>223</sup> or “ignorance” or “madness” or “bondage through excessive emotions” or “deficiency of life,” or any other evil thing one might name, one would still not find the right word for its strangeness. How, then, when detained in such a prison, the soul should ever become adequate for such an activity can in no way reasonably be accounted for.

For if we seem actually able to act by participating in, and being enlightened by the gods, it is to this extent alone that we have the benefit of the divine energy. Because of this, it is not insofar as it has its proper excellence and wisdom that the soul itself shares in divine works; and yet if such works were of the soul, either every soul would accomplish them, or only that one which possesses its proper perfection. But as it is, neither of them is able to take on this role. On the contrary, so far as concerns the divine perfection, even the perfect soul is incomplete. So, then, theurgic activity is something different, and the successful accomplishment of divine works is granted only by the gods. Indeed, otherwise it would not be necessary to perform the service of the gods at all; but on this reasoning, without any such worship, we would possess divine goods intrinsically from our own resources. But since these opinions are insane or senseless, we must discard such a supposition as providing any cause worthy of mention for the fulfilment of divine works.

**21** Perhaps, then, what you have put forth third is more true, that “there comes into being a mixed form of substance from our soul and from an exterior divine inspiration.” Look at this, then, more critically, lest being entangled by its apparent plausibility, we find ourselves, all unawares, entangled by it. For if somehow some one thing comes to be from two, this is entirely of

<sup>223</sup> See Plato, *Resp.* 10.621a5.

ὁμοούσιον· οὕτω τὰ στοιχεῖα συνερχόμενα εἰς ταὐτὸ ἐκ πολλῶν ἐν τι ἀπεργάζεται, καὶ ψυχαὶ πλείονες εἰς ψυχὴν μίαν τὴν ὅλην συμμίσγνυνται. Οὐ μέντοι τὸ παντελῶς ἐξηρημένον πρὸς τὸ ἐκβεβηκὸς ἑαυτοῦ γένοιτο ἄν πο- 10  
τε ἐν, οὐδὲ ψυχὴ τοίνυν μετὰ τῆς θείας ἐπιπνοίας ἐν τι ποιεῖ ὑποστάσεως  
εἶδος. Εἰ γὰρ ἁμικτόν ἐστι τὸ θεῖον, οὐδ' ἡ ψυχὴ πρὸς αὐτὸ συμμίσγνυνται·  
καὶ εἰ ἀμετάβλητον ὑπάρχει, οὐκ ἂν ἐκ τῆς συγκράσεως εἰς τὸ κοινὸν ἀπὸ  
τοῦ ἀπλοῦ μεταβληθείη.

[151] Πρότερον μὲν οὖν μικρὰ αἰθύγματα ἀνεγείρειν ἐνόμιζόν τινες καὶ 1  
θεῖα ἐν ἡμῖν εἶδη, ἅπερ, εἴτε φυσικὰ εἴτε ἄλλως ὅπως οὖν ἦν σωματοει-  
δῆ, ἀδύνατα δῆπουθεν ἦν ἐκ τῶν τυχόντων εἰς τὰ θεῖα μεθίστασθαι· ἐν  
δὲ τῷ παρόντι τὴν ψυχὴν ἀποφαίνονται συναιτίαν τῆς θείας συγκράσεως,  
καὶ δῆλον ὅτι ἰσάζιος γίγνεται τοῖς θεοῖς, δίδωσί τε αὐτοῖς τι μόριον καὶ 5  
ἐν τῷ μέρει δέχεται ἀπ' ἐκείνων, μέτρα τε τοῖς κρείττοσιν ἐπιθήσει καὶ  
αὐτὴ ἀπ' ἐκείνων ὀρισθήσεται· ὃ δὲ δεινότατον ὧν λέγουσί τινες, ὅτι καὶ  
ἐν στοιχείων τάξει οἱ θεοὶ προηγούμενοι ἐνυπάρξουσιν τοῖς ἀποτελουμένοις  
ὑφ' ἑαυτῶν, καὶ ἔσται τι παραγόμενον ἀπὸ χρόνου καὶ τῆς κατὰ χρόνον  
συμμίξεως ὃ περιέχει τοὺς θεοὺς ἐν ἑαυτῷ. Τί δὲ δὴ καὶ ἔστι τοῦτο τὸ 10  
σύμμικτον τῆς ὑποστάσεως εἶδος; εἰ μὲν γὰρ τὸ συναμφοτέρον, οὐκ ἔσ-  
ται ἐν ἐκ δυοῖν ἀλλὰ σύνθετόν τι καὶ συμπεφορημένον ἀπὸ τῶν δύο· εἰ δ'  
ὥς ἕτερον ἀμφοῖν, μετάβλητα ἔσται τὰ αἰδία, καὶ τὰ θεῖα τῶν ἐν τῇ γε-  
[152] νέσει φυσικῶν οὐδὲν διοίσει· καὶ τὸ γιγνόμενον ἄτοπον μὲν ἔσται αἰδίων 1  
φυόμενον διὰ γενέσεως, ἀτοπώτερον δέ τι διαλυθήσεται ἐξ αἰδίων ὕφε-  
στηκός. Οὐδαμῶς ἄρα οὐδὲ ἡ τοιαύτη δόξα περὶ τῆς μαντείας ἔχει τινὰ  
λόγον. Νοήσωμεν δ' ἔτι καὶ τὴν παράδοξον ταύτην ἐπόληψιν, εἴτε μίαν  
τις αὐτὴν θεῖη εἴτε δύο. 5

**22** Λέγεις τοίνυν ὥς ἡ ψυχὴ γεννᾷ δύναμιν φανταστικὴν τοῦ μέλ-  
λοντος διὰ τοιούτων κινήματων, ἥ τὰ προσαγόμενα ἀπὸ τῆς ὕλης ὑφίστη-  
σι διὰ τῶν ἐνουσῶν δυνάμεων δαίμονας, καὶ μάλιστα ἡ ἀπὸ τῶν ζώων

[150].8 συνερχόμενα cj. B: συνεχόμενα VM || 9 συμμίσγνυνται VM:  
συμπήγγνυνται cj. B || 11 ὑποστάσεως εἶδος V: εἶδος ὑποστάσεως M || [151].3  
μεθίστασθαι cj. B: μεθιστάναι (ους p. n., άναι s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> μεθίστους VM || 5  
ισάζιος (ω et acc. cancell., ο s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: ισαξίως VM || 12 συμπεφορημένον ]  
συμπεφυρμένον cj. i. m. B<sup>3</sup> | εἰ M: εἰς V || [152].1 γιγνόμενον cj. B: γενόμενον  
VM | ἄτοπον cj. B: ἀτόπως (ν p. n., σ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> ἀτόπων VM || 7 ἡ VM: ἥ  
i. m. V<sup>2</sup>

the same form, and of the same nature, and of the same essence. So the elements coming together produce from many one specific thing, and many souls are joined together to form one all-soul.<sup>224</sup> Nevertheless, anything which is completely transcendent cannot become one with that which has gone forth from itself; nor may the soul then produce some one form of substance in communion with the divine inspiration. For if the divine is unmixed, not even is the soul mixed with it; and if it is unchangeable, it would not be transformed from something simple into a compound.

But formerly some believed that “small sparks” roused in us divine forms which, being either natural or in some other fashion corporeal, obviously cannot be transformed from things of everyday chance to things divine. In the present case, to be sure, they declare the soul is a joint cause of the divine mixture, and it is clear that (on this theory) it becomes equal in worth to the gods, and gives to them a constituent part of itself, and in turn receives something from them, and it also imposes measures upon the superior beings, and is itself limited by them.

But most repellent of what some people say is that the gods, in spite of their precedence, exist in the manner of elements in those things which are produced by themselves, and that there will be something born from time and from a mixture taking place in time which includes the gods in itself. But what indeed is this mixed form of substance? For if it is a complex of both, it will not be one from two, but something composite and constructed from both. But if as an entity other than the two, the eternal things will be changeable, and divine things will not at all differ from physical things in creation. And it will be absurd that an eternal being should be formed through becoming, but more absurd still is the idea that anything consisting of things eternal will be dissolved. By no means, then, has such an opinion about divination any basis. But let us go on to consider the following paradoxical notion, whether one considers it one or two.

**22** You say, then, that “the soul generates an imaginative power of the future through such movements,” or that “the soul, by means of its inherent powers, shapes the products derived from

<sup>224</sup> An interesting allusion to Plotinus’s all-soul; see e.g. *Enn.* 4.3.1–2.



εἰλημμένη. Δοκεῖ δέ μοι ταῦτα δεινὴν παρανομίαν ἐμφαίνειν εἰς ὅλην τὴν  
 θεολογίαν τε καὶ τὴν θεουργικὴν ἐνέργειαν· ἐν μὲν γὰρ ἄτοπον πρῶτον 10  
 καταφαίνεται, εἰ γεννητοὶ εἰσι καὶ φθαρτοὶ οἱ δαίμονες· ἕτερον δὲ τούτου  
 δεινότερον, εἰ ἀπὸ τῶν ὑστέρων ἐαυτῶν παράγονται πρότεροι αὐτῶν ὄντες·  
 ψυχῆς γὰρ δήπου καὶ τῶν περὶ τοῖς σώμασι δυνάμεων προὔφεσθήκασιν οἱ  
 [153] δαίμονες. Πρὸς τούτοις πῶς δύναται τὰ τῆς | μεριστῆς ψυχῆς ἐν σώμα- 1  
 τι κατεχομένης ἐνεργήματα εἰς οὐσίαν καθίστασθαι, καὶ ταῦτα χωριστὰ  
 εἶναι ἔξω τῆς ψυχῆς καθ' ἑαυτά; ἢ πῶς αἱ περὶ τοῖς σώμασι δυνάμεις  
 ἀφίστανται τῶν σωμάτων, καίτοι ἐν τοῖς σώμασι τὸ εἶναι ἔχουσαι; τίς  
 δὲ δή ἐστιν ὁ ἀπολύων αὐτὰς ἀπὸ τῆς σωματικῆς συστάσεως καὶ μετὰ τὴν 5  
 διάλυσιν συνάγων πάλιν εἰς μίαν σύνοδον; ἔσται γὰρ οὕτω προϋπάρχων  
 ὁ τοιοῦτος δαίμων πρὸ τοῦ ὑποστῆναι· ἔχει δὲ καὶ τὰς κοινὰς ἀπορίας ὁ  
 λόγος· πῶς γὰρ δήποτε ἀπὸ τῶν μὴ ἐχόντων μαντικὴν μαντικὴ φύεται,  
 καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν μὴ ἐχόντων ψυχὴν σωμάτων ψυχὴ ἀπογεννᾶται; ἢ τὸ ὅλον  
 φάναι πῶς ἀπὸ τῶν ἀτελεστέρων τελειότερα παράγεται; καὶ ὁ τρόπος δὲ 10  
 τῆς παραγωγῆς φαίνεται μοι ἀδύνατος· τὸ γὰρ διὰ κινήματων τῆς ψυχῆς  
 καὶ διὰ τῶν ἐν τοῖς σώμασι δυνάμεων παράγεσθαι οὐσίαν, ἀδύνατον. Ἀπὸ  
 γὰρ τῶν μὴ ἐχόντων οὐσίαν οὐσία οὐχ οἷα τέ ἐστιν ἀποτελεῖσθαι.

Πόθεν δὲ καὶ φανταστικὴ τοῦ μέλλοντος γίννεται; παρὰ τίνος λα-  
 [154] βοῦσα τὸ μαντικόν; ὁρῶμεν γὰρ δήπου | τῶν ἐνσπειρομένων διὰ γενέσεως 1  
 οὐδὲν οὐδέποτε πλείονός τινος μεταλαμβάνον ἢ ὅσον δίδεται αὐτῷ ἀπὸ τοῦ  
 πρώτως αὐτὸ ἀπογεννῶντος. Τὸ δ' ἔοικε προσθήκην τινὰ περιττοτέραν  
 παραδέχεσθαι ἀπὸ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος· εἰ μὴ ἄρα τις λέγοι τῇ ἀπὸ τῶν ζώων  
 ὕλη τοὺς δαίμονας ἐπιβεβηκέναι, προσαγομένη δ' αὐτῇ συμπαθῶς πρὸς 5

[152].11 γεννητοί scr. B: γεννητοί VM || [153].5 μετὰ τὴν cj. Westerink:  
 σώματι τὴν VM σωματικὴν (τὴν cancell., κὴν i. m.) V<sup>2</sup> || 12 οὐσίαν VM: οὐσία  
 i. m. V<sup>c</sup> || [154].2 μεταλαμβάνον scripsi: μεταλαμβάνοντος VM || 3 αὐτὸ  
 scripsi: ἑαυτὸ VM || 5 προσαγομένη... αὐτῇ VM: προσαγομένης... αὐτῆς cj.  
 Gale

matter into daemons, especially when the matter is taken from living beings.”<sup>225</sup> These views seem to me to display an appalling disregard both for all theology and for theurgic activity. For one absurdity appears from the outset, if daemons are deemed to be created and perishable; another even more appalling absurdity is if they are created, as beings that are prior, from entities posterior to themselves; for certainly the daemons exist prior to both soul and bodily powers. Moreover, how is it possible that the activities of a divisible soul, held fast in a body, could be transformed into essence and exist separately by themselves, outside of the soul? Or how may the powers of bodies, although they have their existence in bodies, be detached from bodies? Who, then, is it that frees them from their corporeal state and, after their dissolution, brings them back again to unity? For thus a daemon of such a character will exist prior to its own creation. Your reasoning also has general difficulties. For how, I ask, can divination be produced from things without a power of divination, and how may a soul be created from bodies without a soul? Or how, speaking generally, are things more perfect created from those less perfect? Even their manner of production appears impossible to me. For it is impossible that real being could be produced through the soul’s movements and through powers in their bodies. For from things not having real being, real being cannot be produced.

From whence indeed arises the power to imagine the future? From what does it receive the power of divination? For we doubtless see that among the things sown by generation nothing ever has more than that given to it by its first generator. But it seems rather that the imaginative faculty receives a certain additional supplement arisen from what has no being, unless one is to say that daemons get a foothold on matter from (sacrificed) animals; and that they are moved sympathetically<sup>226</sup> towards it when

<sup>225</sup> This is extremely odd. Porphyry’s suggestion, as becomes clearer in the following lines, is that humans may actually *create* daemoniac forces; we learn later in III.28 that some unscrupulous magicians used to create daemoniac images using material substances, a process called *εἰδωλοποιητικὴ τέχνη* (“image-making”), of which “Abamon” strongly disapproved. See esp. III.28.168.

<sup>226</sup> Iamblichus was not a little cautious of the notion of *συμπάθεια*, not least because Plotinus and Porphyry attributed the effectiveness of theurgy solely to a process of automatic response. See Plotinus, *Enn.* 4.4.26.3–4;

αὐτὴν κινεῖσθαι. Οὐκοῦν κατὰ γε ταύτην τὴν δόξαν οὐκ ἀπογεννῶνται οἱ δαίμονες ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν τοῖς σώμασι δυνάμεων, προηγούμενοι δ' αὐτῶν καὶ προϋπάρχοντες συγκινοῦνται αὐταῖς ὁμοειδῶς. Εἰ δὲ δὴ ὅτι μάλιστα καὶ οὕτως εἰσὶ συμπαθεῖς, οὐχ ὁρῶ τίνα τρόπον εἴσονται τι περὶ τοῦ μέλλοντος ἀληθές. Οὐ γὰρ συμπαθοῦς δυνάμεως οὐδ' ἐνύλου καὶ κατεχομένης ἐν τινι 10 τόπῳ καὶ σώματι τὸ προγιγνώσκειν τε καὶ προμηνύειν τὸ μέλλον, ἀλλὰ τοῦναντίον τῆς ἀπὸ πάντων τούτων ἀπολελυμένης. Καὶ αὕτη δὴ οὖν ἡ δόξα τοιαύτας ἐχέτω τὰς εὐθύνas.

[155] | **23** Αἱ δ' ἐπὶ τῇδε ἐπιστάσεις ἀνάγονται μὲν εὐθὺς ὡς δι- 1  
στάζουσai περὶ τοῦ τρόπου τῆς μαντείας, προϊοῦσαι δ' ἀνατρέπειν αὐτὴν παντελῶς ἐπιχειροῦσιν. Διελώμεθα οὖν καὶ ἡμεῖς τὸν λόγον πρὸς ἀμ-  
φότερα ταῦτα. Ἀρξώμεθα δὲ διαλύειν πρῶτον τὰ πρότερα· κατὰ γὰρ  
τοὺς ὕπνους μὴδὲν πραγματευσάμενοι ἐνίοτε τῷ μέλλοντι ἐπιβάλλομεν, 5  
καὶ πραγματευσάμενοι πολλάκις οὐκ ἐπιβάλλομεν. Οὐχ ὅτι ἐξ ἡμῶν τε  
καὶ ἔξωθεν ἐστὶ τὸ αἴτιον τῆς μαντικῆς· ἐφ' ὧν γὰρ ὥρισται τὸ ἄφ' ἡμῶν  
προκατάρχον καὶ συνεπόμενον ἀπὸ τῶν ἔξωθεν σύνταξιν τε ταῦτα συμ-  
πλεκομένην ἔχει πρὸς ἄλληλα, ὥρισμένως ἐπὶ τούτων τὰ ἔργα ἐπιτελεῖται,  
καὶ συνέπεται τοῖς προηγούμενοις τὰ πρὸς αὐτὰ συνηρημένα· ὅταν δ' 10  
ἀπολελυμένον ᾗ τὸ αἴτιον καθ' ἑαυτὸ προϋπάρχον, οὐχ ὥρισται τὸ τέλος  
ἐφ' ἡμῖν, τὸ δὲ πᾶν ἐπὶ τοῖς ἐκτὸς κεῖται. Καὶ νῦν οὖν τὸ μὴ πάντως τοῖς  
ἡμετέροις ἔργοις συντρέχειν τὴν ἐν τοῖς ὀνειροῖς ἀλήθειαν καὶ τὸ πολλά-  
κις αὐτὴν ἄφ' ἑαυτῆς ἐλλάμπειν, ἔξωθεν τε δείκνυσιν ἀπὸ θεῶν οὔσαν τὴν  
[156] μαντεῖαν | καὶ ταύτην αὐτεξούσιον ὅταν βούληται καὶ ὡς ἂν ἐθέλῃ μετ' 1  
εὐμενείας τὸ μέλλον ἀναφαίνουσιν.

**24** Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν τοιοῦτον ἐχέτω τὸν ἀπολογισμόν· ἐν δὲ τοῖς  
μετὰ ταῦτα πειρώμενος τὸν τρόπον διερμηνεύειν τῆς μαντικῆς, ἀναιρεῖς

[154].11 τε scripsi: δὲ VM μὲν cj. Gale || [155].12 πᾶν M: περὶ V πέρας  
i. m. V<sup>2</sup> || [156].2 ἀναφαίνουσιν cj. Gale: ἀναφαίνουσα VM || 4 διερμηνεύειν  
(alt. v s. v.) V<sup>r</sup>M<sup>c</sup>: διερμηνεύει VM

it is brought near to them. Therefore according to this opinion the daemons are not generated from the powers in bodies, but while preceding and existing before them, they are moved along with them through specific similarity. But even assuming that they are ever so subject to the influence of sympathy, I do not see in what way they will know anything true about the future. For foreknowledge and forecasting are not the province of a power exerting sympathetic influence or of something enmeshed in matter and held fast in a specific place and body, but, on the contrary it is characteristic of a power that is freed from all these. And let that be a corrective to this opinion of yours.

**23** At first sight, the difficulties brought up immediately after this express doubt about the manner of divination; but as they proceed, they tend to overthrow divination entirely. Let us, then, divide our response in accord with both tendencies. And let us begin by resolving the first of these difficulties: for, you say, “in sleep, when not busying themselves with things, one sometimes apprehends the future, and often again when we are busied, we do not apprehend it.” Not that the cause of divination comes either from us or from the outside world. For in those cases where the source of divination as determined by us, and that which accompanies it from without have an arrangement linked with one another, they act on the basis of these, occur in due fashion, and follow the causes which precede them, being knit together to one another. But when the cause is free and enjoys pre-existence by itself, the end is not determined by us, and everything depends upon things exterior. Now, as things are, the fact that the truth in our dreams does not wholly concur with our actions, and often shines forth from itself, shows that divination comes from without, for it is from the gods, and that this is in its own power whenever it desires, and that as it wishes, it reveals the future with good will.<sup>227</sup>

**24** Let these matters, then, have such a reasoned response. But later, when trying to interpret the manner of divination, you

4.4.38–45; Porphyry, *Aneb.* 2.5d; 18d Sodano, refuted by “Abamon” below at III.26–27; cf. V.7.208–V.9.210; X.3.287–288. “Abamon” argues later that such powers of nature are exploited only by magicians, who operate solely *περι τὴν φύσιν* (IX.2.273.11) and make things happen according to “a certain necessary sympathy” (*διὰ τινος συμπαθοῦς ἀνάγκης*, VI.4.244.9–10).

<sup>227</sup> Cf. above III.2–3.

αὐτὴν παντάπασιν. Εἰ γὰρ πάθος ψυχῆς αἴτιον αὐτῆς καθίσταται, τίς ἂν 5  
 εὖ φρονῶν ἀσάτω πράγματι καὶ ἐμπλήκτω πρόγνωσιν ἀποδοίη τεταμέ-  
 νην καὶ σταθεράν; ἢ τί δήποτε σωφρονοῦσα μὲν ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ ἄτρεπτος  
 οὕσα κατὰ τὰς βελτίονας ἐαυτῆς δυνάμεις τὰς νοερὰς καὶ διανοητικὰς  
 ἀγνοεῖ τὸ ἐσόμενον, πάσχουσα δὲ κατὰ τὰς ἀτάκτους καὶ ταραχώδεις κι- 10  
 νήσεις ἐπιβάλλει τῷ μέλλοντι; τί γὰρ δήποτε καὶ ἔχει τὸ πάθος οἰκεῖον  
 εἰς τὴν θεωρίαν τῶν ὄντων; τί δ' οὐ μᾶλλον ἐμποδίζει πρὸς ἀληθεστέραν  
 κατανόησιν; ἔτι τοίνυν εἰ μὲν διὰ παθῶν τὰ πράγματα τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ  
 συνίστατο, ἢ ὁμοίωσις ἂν τῶν παθῶν εἶχέ τινα πρὸς αὐτὰ οἰκειότητα, εἰ  
 [157] δὲ διὰ λόγων καὶ διὰ τῶν εἰδῶν ἐπιτελεῖται, ἄλλη τις | αὐτῶν ἔσται ἢ πρό- 1  
 γνωσις ἀπηλλαγμένη παντὸς πάθους. Ἐτι τὸ πάθος μόνου τοῦ παρόντος  
 αἰσθάνεται καὶ τοῦ ἤδη ὑφεστηκότος, ἢ δὲ πρόγνωσις καὶ τῶν μηδέπω  
 ὄντων ἀντιλαμβάνεται· ἕτερον ἄρα ἐστὶ τὸ προγινώσκειν τοῦ πάσχειν.

Σκεψώμεθα δὴ καὶ τὰ τεκμήριά σου τῆς τοιαύτης δόξης. Τὸ μὲν δὴ 5  
 καταλαμβάνεσθαι τὰς αἰσθήσεις πρὸς τὸ ἐναντίον τείνει ἢ οἶον σὺ λέγεις·  
 γνωρίσμα γὰρ ἐστὶ τοῦ μηδὲν φάντασμα ἀνθρώπειον τηρικαῦτα ἀνακινεῖ-  
 σθαι. Οἱ δὲ προσενεχθέντες ἀτμοὶ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἔχουσι τὴν συγγένειαν,  
 οὐ πρὸς τὴν ψυχὴν τοῦ ἐποπτεύοντος. Αἱ τε ἐπικλήσεις οὐκ ἐπιπνοίας  
 τῆς διανοίας ἀνεγείρουσιν ἢ σωματικὰ πάθη ἐν τῷ δεχομένῳ· ἄγνωστοι 10  
 γὰρ εἰσι παντελῶς καὶ ἀπόρρητοι, μόνῳ δὲ τῷ θεῷ γνωρίμως λέγονται  
 ὃν ἐπικαλοῦνται· τὸ δ' εἶναι μὴ πάντας ἀλλὰ τοὺς ἀπλουστέρους καὶ νέους  
 ἐπιτηδειότερους δηλοῖ τοῦτο, ὥς εἰς καταδοχὴν τῷ ἕξῳθεν ἐπεισιόντι καὶ  
 κατέχοντι πνεύματι οἱ τοιοῦτοὶ εἰσιν ἐτοιμότεροι. Ἐκ δὴ τούτων οὐ καλῶς  
 [158] τοπάζει πάθος εἶναι τὸν ἐνθουσιασμόν· συμβαίνει γὰρ | ἀπὸ γε τούτων 1  
 τῶν σημείων ἕξῳθεν αὐτὸν ὥς ἐπίπνοϊαν ἐπιρρεῖν.

25 Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν οὕτως ἡμῖν ἐχέτω· τὸ δ' ἐπὶ τούτοις ἀπὸ τῆς  
 ἐνθέου παραφορᾶς ἐπὶ τὴν ἔκστασιν τῆς διανοίας τὴν ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον ἀπο-  
 πίπτει, τὴν τε ἐν τοῖς νοσήμασι συμπίπτουσαν μανίαν παραλόγως αἰτίαν 5

[156].6-7 τεταμένην VM: τεταγμένην cj. i. m. B<sup>3</sup> || 9 ἐσόμενον M:  
 ἐπόμενον V || [157].15 τοπάζει V: τοπάζη M στοχάζη cj. Gale || [158].1 γε  
 scripsi: τε VM || 2 αὐτὸν V: αὐτοῦ M || 5 νοσήμασι cj. V<sup>2</sup> (pr. σ s. v.):  
 νοήμασι VM

succeed in doing away with it completely. For if the cause of it be made "a passion of the soul," who with good sense would accord to something so unstable and impulsive a designed and deliberate foreknowledge? Or why is the soul, once of sound reason and constant in accord with its better powers, those of mind and understanding, ignorant of what is to be, but when experiencing disorderly and turbulent motions manages to hit upon the future? For why should emotion be suitable for the contemplation of real beings? Why is this not rather a hindrance to genuine observation? Moreover, if the things in the cosmos were constituted by passions, then something like the passions would have a certain affinity with them; but if they are established by rational principles and forms, the foreknowledge of them will be something different, remote from every passion. Moreover, passion perceives only the present and what already exists, but foreknowledge apprehends things that do not yet exist. Foreknowledge, then, is something other than experiencing passion.

Let us, however, consider the evidence for such an opinion as you are maintaining. "The inhibition of the senses," however, tends to the opposite of what you claim. One may recognise the truth of this from the fact that no human apparitions are aroused in this context. But the "vapours of sacrificed animals" offered to the god have their kinship, but not with the soul of the contemplator. And the invocations do not arouse inspirations of the intellect or bodily emotions in the one receiving them: for they are wholly unknown and mysterious, and are spoken intelligibly only for the god whom they invoke. And that "not all, but the more simple-minded and young are suitable" shows that as such, they are more prepared for receiving the spirit which enters from without, and which takes possession of them.<sup>228</sup> On the basis of this, then, you do not rightly divine that "divine possession is an emotion;" for from these signs at least it follows that it flows in from without like an inspiration.

**25** Let us then entertain these matters. But thereupon the argument<sup>229</sup> takes us down from inspired frenzy to the displacement of the intellect toward the inferior, and claims, irrationally,

<sup>228</sup> Cf. III.17 and note ad loc.

<sup>229</sup> See our note to I.11 on the use of the third person.

εἶναι φησι τῆς μαντικῆς. Χολῆς γὰρ πλεονασμοῖς ὥς ἔστιν εἰκάσαι τῆς  
 μελαίνης καὶ μέθης παρατροπαῖς καὶ τῇ λύσσει τῇ ἀπὸ τῶν λυσσώντων  
 κυνῶν συμβαινούσῃ τὸν ἐνθουσιασμόν ἀπεικάζει. Δεῖ τοίνυν ἐξ ἀρχῆς  
 διελέσθαι διχῇ τὰ εἶδη τῆς ἐκστάσεως, ὥς τὰ μὲν ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον παρα-  
 τρέπεται ... καὶ τὰ μὲν ἀνοίας πληροῖ καὶ παραφροσύνης, τὰ δὲ τῆς παρ' 10  
 ἀνθρώποις σωφροσύνης τιμιώτερα ἀγαθὰ παρέχει· καὶ τὰ μὲν ἐπὶ τὴν  
 ἄτακτον καὶ πλημμελῆ καὶ ὕλικὴν ἀποπίπτει κίνησιν, τὰ δ' ἐπιδίδωσιν  
 ἑαυτὰ πρὸς τὴν ἐξάρχουσαν αἰτίαν καὶ αὐτῆς τῆς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ διατάξεως·  
 καὶ τὰ μὲν ὥς ἐστερημένα τῆς γνώσεως παραφέρεται ἀπὸ τοῦ φρονεῖν, τὰ  
 [159] δ' ὥς συναπτόμενα τοῖς ὑπερέχουσι πάσης | τῆς ἐν ἡμῖν φρονήσεως· καὶ τὰ 1  
 μὲν ἔστιν ἐν τροπῇ, τὰ δ' ἄτρεπτα· καὶ τὰ μὲν παρὰ φύσιν, τὰ δ' ὑπὲρ τὴν  
 φύσιν· καὶ τὰ μὲν καταγωγὰ ψυχῆς, τὰ δ' ἀναγωγὰ· καὶ τὰ μὲν διύστησιν  
 ἔξω παντάπασι τῆς θείας μοίρας, τὰ δὲ πρὸς αὐτὴν συνάπτει.

Διὰ τί δὴ οὖν τοσοῦτον ἀπεσφάλῃ ὁ λόγος τῆς προκειμένης ὑποθέ- 5  
 σεως, ὥς ἐπὶ τὰ ἔσχατα παρενεχθῆναι τῆςμανίας κακὰ ἀπὸ τῶν πρωτείων  
 καὶ ἀγαθῶν; τί γὰρ δὴ ταῖς μελαγχολίαις ἢ μέθαις ἢ ταῖς ἄλλαις ταῖς  
 ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος ἐγειρομέναις παρακοπαῖς προσέοικεν ὁ ἐνθουσιασμός;  
 Τίς δ' ἂν μαντεία ποτὲ ἐγγένοιτο ἀπὸ τῶν σημάτων τοῦ σώματος; οὐχ ἡ  
 μὲν τοιαύτη παραγωγὴ διαφθορὰ παντελής ἐστίν, ἡ δὲ θεοφορία τελειό- 10  
 της καὶ σωτηρία τῆς ψυχῆς; οὐ κατ' ἀσθένειαν μὲν ἢ φαύλη συμπίπτει,  
 κατὰ πλήρωσιν δὲ δυνάμεως ἢ βελτίων; ὥς δ' ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν ἡ μὲν ἡσυχά-  
 ζουσα κατὰ τὴν οἰκείαν ζωὴν καὶ σύνεσιν ἑτέρῳ παραδίδωσι τὴν ἑαυτῆς  
 χρῆσιν, ἡ δὲ τὰς οἰκείας ἐνεργείας ἐνεργοῦσα κάκιστα καὶ θορυβωδῶς  
 ταύτας ἀποδίδωσι. 15

[160] | Κακείνη τοίνυν ἡ διαφορὰ πάντων ἐστὶν ἐναργεστάτη, ὥς ἄρα ἐπὶ 1  
 τῶν θείων πάντα τὰ ἔργα ἐξήλλακται. Ὡσπερ γὰρ ἐξήρηται τὰ κρεῖτ-  
 τονα γένη παρὰ πάντα τὰ ἄλλα, οὕτω καὶ τὰ ἐνεργήματα αὐτῶν οὐδενὶ  
 τῶν ὄντων προσέοικεν. Ὡστε ἂν εἴπῃς θεῖαν παραφορὰν, ἄφελε πάσας εὐ-  
 θὺς τὰς ἀνθρωπίνας παρατροπίας. Καὶ ἐὰν νῆψιν αὐτοῖς ἱερατικὴν ἀποδῶς, 5

[158].7 λύσσει M: λύσει (alt. σ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> λύσει V || 9 ὥς VM: ὧν cj.  
 Gale || 10 ante καὶ lacunam (e. g. τὰ δὲ ἐπὶ τὸ κρεῖττον ἀνατείνεται) susp.  
 Westerink || [159].9 σημάτων (η s. v.) M<sup>c</sup>: σωμάτων M δημάτων V νοσημάτων  
 cj. Vergicius i. m. R, Boulliau i. m. U et B<sup>3</sup>

that the cause of divination is the madness that occurs in diseases.<sup>230</sup> For, as much as one is able to fathom, it compares possession to the “excesses of black bile” and to “the aberrations of drunkenness” and to “the raging of rabid dogs.” It is thus necessary initially to distinguish two forms of ecstasy, as one sort is diverted to the inferior <while another is turned towards the higher;><sup>231</sup> one fills its recipients with folly and insanity, while the other furnishes goods more precious than human good sense; and the one degenerates to a disorderly, discordant, and material movement, while the other gives itself to the supreme cause which itself directs the orderly arrangement of the cosmos. And the former, destitute of knowledge, is led astray from good sense, but the latter is united with those beings superior to all our good sense: one is in change, the other unchangeable; one is contrary to nature, the other superior to nature; one causes the descent of the soul, the other its ascent; and one separates it wholly apart from participation in the divine, while the other unites it to it.

Why, then, does your discourse go so far astray from the proposed hypothesis that it is turned from the primary and good things to the worst ills of madness? For in what does divine possession resemble melancholy or drunkenness, or any other frenzies awakened by the body? What oracle even arises from bodily symptoms? Is not such a deviation wholly a perversion, while divine possession is a perfection and deliverance of the soul? Does not worthless ecstasy accord with weakness, but the better accord with a fullness of power? And, in a word, the latter being in a calm condition in respect of its own life and intelligence, gives itself for the use of another, while the former exercises its proper activities and manifests them in wicked and turbulent conditions.

This difference, however, is the clearest of all: where the divine is concerned, all works are transformed. For just as the superior orders are completely superior to all others, so also their operations are not like those of any other beings. So that if you speak of a divine derangement, you ought to remove immediately all human aberrations. And if you attribute to them a sacred

<sup>230</sup> νοσήμασι is a conjecture by Ficino, recommended by Sicherl, but the νοήμασι (“ideas” or “conceptions”) of the MSS is possible.

<sup>231</sup> There is a lacuna here in the text, and we accept Westerink’s suggestion of inserting something along the lines of τὰ δὲ ἐπὶ τὸ κρεῖττον ἀνατείνεται.



μηκέτι σκόπει τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην νήψιν ὡς οὖσαν ἐκείνη παραπλησίαν. Πάν-  
 τως δὲ τὰς κατὰ τὰ νοσήματα τοῦ σώματος οἷον ὑποχύσεις καὶ τὰς ἀπὸ  
 τῶν νοσημάτων κινουμένας φαντασίας μὴ παρὰβάλλε ταῖς θεαῖς φαντα-  
 σίαις· τί γὰρ δὴ κοινὸν αὐται πρὸς ἀλλήλας ἔχουσιν; μὴδ' αὖ τὰς ἀμφιβό-  
 λους καταστάσεις, οἷον μεταξὺ νήψεώς τε καὶ ἐκστάσεως, παραθῆς ποτε 10  
 ταῖς ὠρισμέναις κατὰ μίαν ἐνέργειαν ἱερατικαῖς τῶν θεῶν ὄψεσιν. Ἀλλὰ  
 μὴδὲ ταῖς ἀπὸ τῆς γοητείας τεχνικῶς κατασκευαζομέναις φαντασίαις πα-  
 ράβάλλε τὰς ἐναργεστάτας θεωρίας τῶν θεῶν· οὐτε γὰρ ἐνέργειαν οὐτε  
 [161] οὐσίαν τῶν ὁρωμένων | οὐτε ἀλήθειαν αὐται ἔχουσιν, ἄχρι δὲ τοῦ δοκεῖν 1  
 φαντάσματα ψιλὰ προτείνουσιν.

Πάντα δὴ οὖν τὰ τοιαῦτα ἀπορήματα ὡς ἀλλοτρίως προσαγόμενα  
 καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἐναντίων ἐπὶ τὰ ἐναντία μεταφερόμενα οὐχ ἡγούμεθα ἅπτε-  
 σθαι τῆς προσηκούσης ὑποθέσεως· ὅθεν καὶ ἡμεῖς παραδείξαντες αὐτῶν 5  
 τὸ ἀπηρτημένον, οὐκέτ' οἰόμεθα δεῖν ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐπὶ πλεῖον διατρίβειν, ὡς  
 ἐριστικῶς περιπλανωμένοις ἀλλ' οὐχὶ μετὰ τιнос φιλοσοφίας ἐπεζητημέ-  
 νοις.

26 Πολλὰ μὲν οὖν ἂν τις θανάσειε καὶ ἄλλα τῆς ἀντιλογικῆς  
 καινοτομίας, ἀτὰρ δὴ καὶ τὴν ἐναντίωσιν τῶν δοξασμάτων καταπληγείη 10  
 ἂν εἰκότως, εἰ τῆς ὅλης ὑποθέσεως φαινομένης μόνον παρὰ τοῖς γόησιν,  
 οὔσης δ' οὐδαμῶς, καὶ παρὰ τοῖς ἐκ πάθους ἢ νοσήματος ὠρμημένοις,  
 ἀπατηλῶς πάντῃ διακειμένοις, τολμᾷ λέγειν ὡς ἔνεστι καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας  
 [162] αὐτοὺς τυγχάνειν. Ποία γὰρ | ἀρχὴ τῶν ἀληθῶν ἢ τίς ἀφορμὴ ἢ μικρὰ 1  
 ἢ μέζων ἐνυπάρξειε τῆς ἐπὶ τὸ ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐπιβολῆς; δεῖ δὲ μὴ τοιαύτην  
 λαμβάνειν τὴν ἀλήθειαν, οἷα γένοιτ' ἂν ποτε καὶ κατὰ συντυχίαν (ἐπεὶ τοί-  
 γε καὶ τοῖς εἰκῇ φερομένοις συμπίπτει γράφεσθαι)· μὴδὲ τοιαύτην οἷα τὰ  
 δρώμενα πρὸς τὰ δρῶντα συνομολογεῖ συμφώνως (καὶ γὰρ καὶ ταῖς αἰ- 5  
 σθήσεσι καὶ ταῖς φαντασίαις τῶν ζώων ταῦτα σύνεστιν)· οὐδὲν οὖν ἔχει  
 οἰκεῖον οὐδὲ θεῖον οὐδὲ κρεῖττον τῆς κοινῆς φύσεως ἀληθές· ἀλλ' ἥτις  
 ἔστηκε κατ' ἐνέργειαν ὡσαύτως καὶ παροῦσαν ἔχει τῶν ὄντων τὴν ὅλην  
 εἰδησιν, τῇ τε οὐσίᾳ τῶν πραγμάτων συμφυῆς ἐστὶ καὶ ἀπτῶτι τῷ λόγῳ  
 χρῆται καὶ τελείως οἶδε πάντα καὶ ἀραρότως καὶ ὠρισμένως. Ταύτην τῇ 10

[160].6-7 πάντως (alt. v p. n., σ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: πάντων VM || 7 τὰς<sup>1</sup> (ῆ p. n., τὰς i. m.) κατὰ V<sup>2</sup>: ἡ κατὰ VM ἡκιστα cj. i. m. B<sup>4</sup> || 12 ταῖς M: τῆς V τοῖς (ῆ p. n., οἱ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || [161].3 δὴ οὖν V: δὲ M || 4 μεταφερόμενα V: φερόμενα M || 7-8 ἐπεζητημένοις scr. Parthey: ἐπιζητημένοις VM || 12 ὠρμημένοις VM: ὠρμουμένοις cj. B ὁρμουμένοις cj. U || 13 πάντῃ V: πάντα M

sobriety,<sup>232</sup> no longer consider human abstinence similar to it. Generally, when diseases of the body do provoke forth a kind of outpouring, and imaginations are aroused by diseases, do not compare them with divine imaginations; for what do they have in common with one another? And do not ever compare equivocal states, for example, between sobriety and ecstasy, with sacred visions of the gods determined according to a single activity. And do not, furthermore, compare the clearest visions of the gods to the images produced artificially from magic, for these have neither the energy, nor the essence of things seen, nor truth, but present mere images, reaching only as far as appearance.

All such problems, then, as being put irrelevantly, and transferred from one contrary to another, we do not consider to touch upon the present subject. Hence, indeed, having shown their inappropriateness, we think it necessary to spend no more time with them, since they ramble in a disputatious way, and are not pursued with systematic philosophic vigour.

**26** There are many other reasons for being amazed at disputatious innovation,<sup>233</sup> but indeed one could be suitably astounded at the contradiction among these conjectures if, while the entire subject proposed has the status only of appearance among sorcerers, without any reality, and among those starting from emotion or illness, subject to deception in every way, yet (the argument) dares to say that it is also possible for them to attain the truth. For what starting point of truth, or what food for argument, small or great, would be inherent in their point of view? One should not accept as truth the sort of thing that happens only sometimes and accidentally (since even those who indulge in random movements sometimes happen to write something); nor such truth as results from the concordance of the things done with the agents who do them (for, in fact, this is characteristic of the perceptions and imaginations even of animals); so this, then, contains no particular truth, either divine or superior to nature. But what stands unvaryingly in accord with its activity, has presently complete knowledge of existing things, and, being naturally connected to the essence of things, uses unfailing reasoning, and knows all things completely, fittingly, and definitely. It is this that one must

<sup>232</sup> This seems to be the meaning of  $\nu\eta\psi\iota\varsigma$ .

<sup>233</sup> Cf. VII.5.259 with note ad loc.

μαντεία συναπτεόν. Πολλοῦ ἄρα δεῖ φυσική τις εἶναι αὕτη, οἷα τῶν ζώων ἐνίοις σεισμῶν ποτε καὶ ὑετῶν ἐμπέφυκε πρόληψις. Συμπαθῆς γὰρ αὕτη  
 [163] ἄλλως συμβαίνει συγκινουμένων τινῶν ζώων μοίραις τισὶ | τοῦ παντός καὶ 1  
 δυνάμεσιν, ἥ διὰ τина αἰσθήσεως ὀξύτητα προαισθανομένων τῶν περὶ τὸν  
 ἀέρα μὲν ἤδη συμπιπτόντων πραγμάτων οὐδέπω δὲ τοῖς περὶ γῆν τόποις  
 συμφερομένων.

Εἰ δὴ ταῦτα ἀληθῆ λέγομεν, οὐ δεῖ, εἴ τινα ἐκ φύσεως ἐπιβολὴν 5  
 εἰς τὰ ὄντα παρειλήφμεν ἢ τοῦ μέλλοντος ἐπαφῆν, ἐγκρίνειν ταύτην ὡς  
 μαντικὴν πρόγνωσιν· ἀλλ' ὁμοία μὲν ἐστὶ μαντικῇ, πλὴν οὐδὲν αὕτη βε-  
 βαιότητος ἢ ἀληθείας ἀπολείπεται, τὸ δ' ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ τυγχάνον οὐκ  
 ἀεὶ δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τινων μὲν οὐχὶ δ' ἐπὶ πάντων αἰροῦσα· ὅθεν δὴ οὐδ' εἴ τις  
 ἐστὶν ἐν ταῖς τέχναις, ὥσπερ ἐν κυβερνητικῇ τε καὶ ἰατρικῇ, προσκοποῦσα 10  
 τὸ μέλλον μάθησις, οὐδὲν προσήκει τῇ θεῖᾳ προγνώσει· ἐξ εἰκότων γὰρ  
 ἀναλογίζεται τὸ μέλλον καὶ σημείοις τισὶ τεκμηριοῦται καὶ τούτοις οὐκ  
 ἀεὶ πιστοῖς οὐδ' ὡσαύτως συνηρημένον ἔχουσι τὸ δηλούμενον, οὐτέρ 1  
 [164] τι τὰ σημεῖα δείγματα. Τῆς δὲ θεῖας προνοίας τῶν ἐσομένων βέβαιος | ἡ 1  
 εἰδησις προηγείται, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν αἰτίων ἀμετάπτωτος ἡ πίστις, συνηρ-  
 τημένη τε πάντων πρὸς ἅπαντα ἀδιαλύτως κατάληψις, καὶ ὡσαύτως ἀεὶ  
 μένουσα τῶν ὄλων ὥσπερ παρόντων καὶ ὠρισμένων διάγνωσις.

27 Οὐ δὴ τοῦτο λέγειν δεῖ, ὡς καὶ φύσις καὶ τέχνη καὶ ἡ συμ- 5  
 πάθεια τῶν ὡς ἐν ἐνὶ ζώῳ τῷ παντὶ μερῶν προδηλώσεις ἔχει τινῶν πρὸς  
 ἄλληλα, οὐδ' ὅτι τὰ σώματα οὕτω κατεσκευάσται, ὡς εἶναι προσημασίαν  
 ἀπὸ τῶν ἐτέρων εἰς τὰ ἕτερα. Καὶ πάνυ γὰρ ταῦτα ἐναργῶς ὁρώμενα τῆς  
 θεῖας μαντικῆς ἔχρος τι τὰ μὲν μᾶλλον τὰ δὲ ἥττον παρεσπάσατο· οὐδὲ  
 γὰρ δυνατὸν ἄμοιρα αὐτῆς εἶναι τινα παντελῶς· ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἐν πᾶσιν εἰ- 10  
 κὼν τὰγαθοῦ τὸν θεὸν ἐμφέρεται, οὕτω καὶ τῆς θεῖας μαντικῆς εἰδωλὸν τι  
 ἀμυδρὸν ἢ καὶ ἐναργέστερον ἐν αὐτοῖς καταφαίνεται. Ἄλλ' οὐδὲν τούτων  
 ἐστὶν οἷον τὸ θεῖον τῆς μαντικῆς εἶδος, οὐδ' ἀπὸ τῶν πολλῶν τῶν εἰς τὴν  
 γένεσιν ἀπ' αὐτῆς καθηκόντων φαντασμάτων τὸ ἐν αὐτῆς καὶ θεῖον καὶ  
 [165] ἄμικ|τον εἶδος χαρακτηριστέον· οὐδ' εἴ τινα ἄλλα πορρωτέρω καὶ τούτων 1  
 ἀπώκισται ψευδῇ καὶ ἀπατηλὰ ἰνδάσματα, ταῦτα παραφέρειν ἄξιον εἰς

[162].13 μοίραις (σ σ. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: μοῖραι VM || [163].9 pr. δὲ M: ἐστὶ V  
 || 10 προσκοποῦσα (ι p. n.) V<sup>1</sup>: προσκοποῦσαι VM || [164].4 διάγνωσις (alt.  
 v p. n., alt. σ σ. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: διάνγνωσιν VM || 5 τοῦτο λέγειν V: λέγειν τοῦτο M  
 || 6 ζώῳ V: ζώων M

connect with divination. It is, then, necessary that this be much more than the premonition that some animals instinctively have of earthquakes and storms. For this sympathy happens especially when certain animals unite their movements with certain parts of the cosmos and with its powers, or because of an acuteness of sense in perceiving in advance things taking place in the air, but not yet impinging on the earth.

If, then, these things we say are true, we should not identify such intuition as we have received from nature for real beings or apprehension of the future, with oracular foreknowledge; it has a similarity to divination, except that this latter lacks nothing of certainty and truth, and the former chances upon the truth for the most part, but not always, and gains understanding in the case of some things but not in the case of all. Hence, not even if there is, in the arts and crafts (for example, in piloting a ship, or medicine), some degree of knowledge that grasps the future, it is not at all like divine foreknowledge. For the former calculates the future from probabilities and estimates by certain signs, and these are not always trustworthy, nor, in like manner, do they have what is signified properly connected with that of which the signs are evidence. But divine foreknowledge of future events is directed by a firm knowledge, and an unshakeable assurance deriving from the causes, an indissoluble comprehension connecting all things to all, and in the same manner, a power of an always abiding discernment of all things as present and determinate.

**27** But one should not say this: “that nature and skill and the sympathy of the parts in the universe as in a single living being have prefigurations of some things in respect to others;” nor that “bodies are so disposed as to transmit intimations from some things toward others.” Now certainly these (signs), when clearly seen, have derived a certain trace from divine divination in a greater or lesser degree. Indeed, it is not possible that any part be wholly bereft of it, but just as in all things an image of the good carries god in it, so also an image of divine divination appears in them, sometimes obscure and sometimes more clear. But none of these is such as the divine form of divination, nor may the one divine, unmingled form of it be characterised by the many phantasms that descend from it into the realm of becoming. Nor, if there are other false or delusive appearances farther removed from

τὴν περὶ αὐτῆς κρίσιν· ἀλλ' ἓνα λόγον καὶ μίαν τάξιν καὶ καθ' ἐν τὸ θεῖον εἶδος καὶ κατὰ μίαν τὴν νοητὴν καὶ ἀμετάπτωτον ἀλήθειαν συλληπτέον αὐτό, ὡσαύτως τὴν ἄλλοτε ἄλλως ἐξισταμένην μεταβολὴν ὡς ἀστάθμητον 5 καὶ ἀνάρμοστον τοῖς θεοῖς ἀτιμάζοντας.

Εἰ δὴ τοιοῦτόν ἐστι τὸ ὄντως μαντικὸν θεῖον ἔργον, τίς οὐκ ἂν αἰσχυρθεῖν τὴν ἄνευ διανοίας καὶ οὐ τὰ γιγνόμενα ἀποτελοῦσαν φύσιν παραφέρειν, ὡς κατασκευὴν τινὰ ἀπεργαζομένην ἐν ἡμῖν μαντικὴν, καὶ τοῖς μὲν μᾶλλον ἐντιθεῖσαν τοῖς δὲ ἥττον τὴν ἐπιτηδειότητα ταύτην; ἐν οἷς 10 μὲν γὰρ ἀνθρώποι πρὸς τὴν οἰκείαν τελειότητα ἀφορμὰς εἰλήφασιν παρὰ τῆς φύσεως, ἐν τούτοις καὶ τῆς φύσεως προηγούνται τινες ἐπιτηδειότητες· ἐν οἷς δὲ ἀνθρώπινον μὲν οὐδὲν ἔργον πρόκειται οὐδὲ τέλος ἡμέτερον, θεῖον δὲ τι προτέτακται πρεσβύτερον τῆς φύσεως ἡμῶν ἀγαθόν, οὐκ ἔστιν [166] ὅπως ποτὲ ἐν τούτοις εὐφρῖα τις ἂν | ὑποκατασκευασθεῖη· ὧν γὰρ εἰσιν αἱ 1 τελειότητες, τούτων ἐγγίγνονται καὶ αἱ ἀτελεῖς κατασκευαί. Ἀνθρώπων δ' εἰσὶν αὗται ἀμφοτέραι αἱ ἕξεις· ἃ δ' ἐστὶ μὴ ὡς ἀνθρώποις παρόντα, τούτων οὐκ ἔσται ποτὲ ἐκ φύσεως παρασκευή· θείας ἄρα μαντικῆς οὐδὲν ἐστὶ σπέρμα ἐν ἡμῖν ἐκ φύσεως· ἀλλ' εἰ μὲν τις κοινότερον καὶ ἀνθρωπίνην 5 τινὰ καλοῖη μαντικὴν, τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ἔστω φυσικὴ τις παρασκευή· ἦν δ' ἂν ὄντως τις μαντικὴν ἐπονομάσειε, τὴν τοῖς θεοῖς προσήκουσαν, οὐ δεῖ νομίζειν ταύτην ἐνσπείρεσθαι ἀπὸ φύσεως· τὰ τε γὰρ ἄλλα καὶ τὸ ἀόριστον αὐτῇ κατὰ τὸ μᾶλλον καὶ ἥττον συννομαρεῖ, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο δὲ τῆς μενούσης ἐν σταθεροῖς πέρασιν μαντικῆς θείας χωρὶς διέστηκεν. 10

Διόπερ δὴ καὶ πρὸς τοῦτο ἰσχυρῶς μάχεσθαι δεῖ, ἐάν τις ἐξ ἡμῶν εἶναι λέγῃ τὴν μαντικὴν. Φέρεις δὲ καὶ σὺ τούτου δείγματα ἀπὸ τῶν ἔργων ἐναργῆ· τὸ γὰρ λίθους καὶ βοτάνας φέρειν τοὺς καλουμένους, δεσμεῖν τε ἱερούς τινας δεσμοὺς καὶ λύειν τούτους, τὰ τε κεκλεισμένα ἀνοίγειν καὶ [167] τὰς προαιρέσεις μεταβάλλειν τῶν ὑποδεχομένων, ὥστε ἐκ φαύλων σπου- 1 δαίας ἀπεργάζεσθαι, πάντα δὴ ταῦτα ἔξωθεν τὴν ἐπίπνοϊαν γίγνεσθαι

these, is it proper to bring these forward in a judgement concerning divination. But one must conceive it as a single condition and single order, and according to one divine form and one intelligible and unchangeable truth, and, in like manner, disdaining that mutability which alters itself at different times and in different ways as unstable and incompatible with the gods.

But if, then, divination is truly such a divine work, who would not be ashamed to attribute to it a nature without intellect, which does not bring to completion things which come into being as though it produced some mantic condition in us, and having implanted this receptivity in some more and in others less? For activities in which humans have taken from nature starting points for their own proper perfection, in these, certain aptitudes actually gave a lead even to nature. In those, however, in which no human work is presupposed, nor yet any goal of ours, but a certain divine good prior to our nature is preordained, it is not possible that some natural aptitude be postulated beforehand: for of what things there are perfections, in these cases also arise these imperfect conditions: and both these are states proper to humans. But for things that do not exist in us as humans, there never will be any preparatory state arising from nature. Thus there is no seed, implanted by nature in us, for divine divination. Now, if one is to speak on a vulgar level, and more about some kind of human divination, then we may allow some natural preparation for it; but if one focuses on true divination, which belongs to the gods, we should not believe that this is sown by nature; for, among other things, indetermination attends it in a greater or lesser degree, and because of this it is far removed from divine divination, which remains within fixed boundaries.

Therefore, we must combat this suggestion vigorously, if someone says that divination comes from ourselves. But you also adduce clear proofs of this from things done: “for if the gods, when summoned, carry stones and herbs, tie some sacred knots and untie these, open things closed,<sup>234</sup> and change the attitudes of those receiving them, so that from bad mind-sets they render them good:” all these things signify that inspiration comes from

<sup>234</sup> See V.12.216.1–2 on theurgic release from the “bonds” (δεσμοί) of matter. There are, of course, many references in the magical papyri to binding the gods during spells, e.g. *PGM* IV. 2247; 2327; 2904, and to the loosening of bonds, e.g. *PGM* XII. 173; XIII. 2947.

διασημαίνει· χρῆ δὲ οὐ τοῦτο μόνον προλαμβάνειν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τίς ἐπίπνοια  
θεία παραγενομένη τὴν θεϊαν μαντικὴν ἀπεργάζεται τελείως ἀφορίζεσθαι·  
εἰ δὲ μή, οὐ πρότερον ἐσόμεθα γνωμονικοὶ ταύτης, ἐὰν μὴ τὸ οἰκεῖον ἐπ' 5  
αὐτῇ σημεῖον ἐπιβαλόντες, ἴδιον αὐτῇ γνώρισμα καθάπερ τινὰ σφραγίδα  
προσαρμόσωμεν.

28 Καὶ τοῦτο μὲν ὀλίγον ἔμπροσθεν ἡμῖν διηκριβώται· ὁ δὲ προ-  
τείνεις ὡς οὐδαμῶς ἀπόβλητον τὸ εἶναι γεννητικούς τῶν δραστικῶν εἰ-  
δώλων, θανμάσαιμ' ἂν εἴ τις ἀποδέξαιτο τῶν τὰ ἀληθινὰ εἶδη τῶν θεῶν 10  
θεωρούντων θεουργῶν. Διὰ τί γὰρ ἂν τις εἶδωλα ἀντὶ τῶν ὄντως ὄντων  
ἀνταλλάξαιτο, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν πρωτίστων ἐπὶ τὰ ἔσχατα ἂν ἀπενεχθείη;  
ἢ οὐκ ἴσμεν ὡς πάντα ἀμυδρῶς ἐστὶ κατὰ τὴν τοιαύτην σκιαγραφίαν,  
καὶ τότε ἀληθῆ φαντάσματα ἐστὶ τοῦ ἀληθοῦς καὶ τὰ ἀγαθὰ δοκοῦν-  
τα φαίνεται, ὄντα δὲ οὐδέποτε; καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ὡσαύτως ἐν τῷ γίγνεσθαι 15  
[168] ἐπεισ|έρχεται φερόμενα, γνήσιον δὲ οὐδὲν οὐδὲ τέλειον οὐδὲ ἑναργὲς κέ- 1  
κτηται. Δηλοῖ δὲ καὶ ὁ τρόπος αὐτῶν τῆς ποιήσεως. Οὐ γὰρ θεὸς αὐτῶν  
ἐστὶ ποιητής, ἀλλ' ἀνθρῶπος· οὐδ' ἐκ τῶν ἐνοειδῶν καὶ νοητῶν οὐσιῶν  
παράγεται, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τῆς ὕλης τῆς λαμβανομένης. Τί οὖν ἀγαθὸν γέ-  
νοιτο ἂν ὕλης βλαστάνον καὶ τῶν περὶ τὴν ὕλην καὶ ἐν τοῖς σώμασιν 5  
ὕλικῶν καὶ σωματοειδῶν δυνάμεων; ἢ ἀπ' ἀνθρωπίνης τέχνης ὑφιστάμε-  
νον ἀσθενέστερον καὶ αὐτῶν τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὑπάρχον τῶν τὸ εἶναι αὐτῷ  
παρεχομένων; ποίᾳ δὲ τινι καὶ τέχνῃ πλάττεται τουτὶ τὸ εἶδωλον; λέγε-  
ται μὲν γὰρ ὡς τῇ δημιουργικῇ· ἀλλ' αὕτη γε τῶν ἀληθινῶν ἦν οὐσιῶν  
ἀλλ' οὐχὶ εἰδώλων τινῶν ἐπιτελεστική· ὥστε καὶ ἡ εἰδωλοποιητικὴ τέχνη 10  
πολλοστή τίς ἐστὶν ἀπὸ τῆς φυτουργοῦ τῶν ἀληθινῶν δημιουργίας· ἀλλ'  
οὐδὲ ἀναλογίαν τινὰ πρὸς τὴν θεϊαν ποίησιν ἀποσώζει· οὐ γὰρ διὰ τῶν  
οὐρανίων φυσικῶν κινήσεων ἢ τῆς κατὰ μέρος ὕλης ἢ τῶν δυνάμεων τῶν  
οὕτως διηρημένων ὁ θεὸς δημιουργεῖ πάντα· ταῖς δὲ ἐννοίαις καὶ βου-  
[169] λήσεσι καὶ τοῖς ἀύλοις εἶδεσι διὰ τῆς αἰδίου τε καὶ ὑπερκοσμίου | καὶ 1  
ἐγκοσμίου ψυχῆς δημιουργεῖ τοὺς κόσμους· ὁ δὲ δὴ τῶν εἰδώλων ποιη-  
τῆς λέγεται μὲν ὡς διὰ τῶν περιπολούντων ἀστέρων αὐτὰ ἀπεργάζεται·  
οὐ μὴν, ὡς γε οὕτωςι δόξαι, ἔχει τῷ ὄντι καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς ἀληθείας. Οὐδὲν

[167].6 ἐπιβαλόντες V: ἐπιβάλλοντες M || 9 εἶναι γεννητικούς cj. G.  
Wolff: ἀναγεννητικούς VM ἀναγεννητικούς εἶναι cj. Gale || 11 θεωρούντων  
M: θεωρούντων V θεωρου\*των (pr. o p. n., ω s. v., pr. v eras.) V<sup>2</sup> | ὄντως M  
et (σ ex alt. v) V<sup>2</sup>: ὄντων V || 14 τότε VM: τά τε cj. B (sed á p. n.) et U οὔτε  
cj. Gale

without. But not only must one refuse to assume this, but also to define fully that divine inspiration which, by its advent, produces divine divination; if not, we shall not be skilled in divination before we, by applying to it the proper sign, attach a particular token of recognition, just like a seal.

**28** This has been asserted already above.<sup>235</sup> But as for the claim that you advance, quite seriously, that “there are generators of effective images,” it would astonish me if any of the divine theurgists, who contemplate the true forms of the gods, would approve it. For why would anyone exchange images for true reality, and descend from things superior to things inferior? Or do we not know that everything comes across dimly in such shadow-painting, and in that case we are faced with genuine phantoms of the truth, and things that seem to be good, but never are? And the rest of things, in their coming-to-be, are introduced furtively as they are borne along, but possess nothing true, complete, or distinct. And this is shown by their manner of production. For a god is not the maker of them, but a human being; nor are they produced from simple and intelligible essences, but from the matter that is being applied to the purpose. What good, then, would arise as springing up from matter and things material, and from the material and corporeal powers that exist in bodies? Or comes about by human artistry, weaker and of less importance than the human beings giving existence to it? By what sort of art is this image formed? For it is said that it is formed by the art of the Demiurge himself. But this art is productive of genuine essences, and not mere images. So that the skill of producing images is, indeed, far removed<sup>236</sup> from the creative workmanship of things genuine. But it does not even preserve some analogy to the divine creation. For god fashions all things, not by celestial physical motions, nor by some portion of matter, nor by powers divided in this way: instead, it is by his conceptions, his volitions, and his immaterial forms, and by means of the eternal soul, whether mundane or supramundane, that he fashions the universe. But it is said that the maker of images makes them with the aid of stars in their revolutions; but no, the reality and true situation here is not

<sup>235</sup> That is, at III.26.164.

<sup>236</sup> πολλοστροφς, lit. “at many removes.” Cf. Plato, *Phileb.* 44e3; *Leg.* 896b8.



γὰρ περὶ τοὺς οὐρανίους θεοὺς ἀπείρων δὴ τινων δυνάμεων, ἐν γένος τῶν 5  
ἐν αὐταῖς πάντων ἔσχατόν ἐστι, τὸ φυσικόν. Τούτου δὲ αὐθις τὸ μὲν ἐν  
λόγοις σπερματικοῖς τε καὶ πρὸ τῶν σπερματικῶν τοῖς ἀκινήτοις ἰδρυμέ-  
νον προηγείται καθ' ἑαυτὸ πρὸ τῆς γενέσεως· τὸ δὲ ἐν ταῖς αἰσθηταῖς καὶ  
φανεραῖς κινήσεσιν τε καὶ δυνάμεσιν, ἀπορροαῖς τε ταῖς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ καὶ  
ποιότησιν, ἐνδυναστεύει παρὰ πᾶσαν τὴν φανεράν διακόσμησιν· ἥς πᾶσι 10  
τὸ τελευταῖον ἐν τοῖς περὶ γῆν τόποις ἐπάρχει τῆς περιγείου φανερώς γε-  
νέσεως· τῇ δὲ τῆς φανερώς γενέσεως ἐπικρατεία καὶ ταῖς δι' αἰσθήσεως  
φαινομέναις ποιότησι τῶν ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ καταπεμπομένων ἀπορροῶν ἄλλαι  
τε πολλὰ τέχνηαι χρῶνται, ὥσπερ ἰατρικὴ τε καὶ γυμναστικὴ καὶ πᾶσαι  
[170] ὅσαι κοινωνοῦσι τῇ φύσει τὴν ἐαυτῶν ἀπεργασίαν· καὶ δὴ καὶ εἰδωλο- 1  
ποιὰ μοῖραν τινα γενεσιουργὸν ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἔλκει λίαν ἀμυδράν.

Ὡσπερ οὖν ἔχει τὸ ἀληθές, οὕτω δεῖ καὶ ἀποφαίνεσθαι, ὅτι δὴ αὐ-  
ταῖς μὲν ταῖς περιφοραῖς ἢ ταῖς ἐνυπαρχούσαις ἐν αὐταῖς δυνάμεσιν ἢ ταῖς 5  
κατὰ φύσιν περὶ αὐτὰς ἐνιδρυμέναις οὔτε χρῆται εἰδωλοποιός, οὐθ' ὅλως  
δυνατός ἐστιν αὐτῶν ἐφάπτεσθαι· ταῖς δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς φύσεως αὐτῶν ἔσχά-  
ταις ἀπορροούσαις ἐν τῷ φανερῷ περὶ τὸ τελευταῖον μέρος τοῦ παντός  
τεχνικῶς προσφέρεται, ἀλλ' οὐ θεουργικῶς. Αὐταὶ γάρ, οἶμαι, καὶ τὴν  
κατὰ μέρος ὕλην συμμιγνύμεναι πρὸς αὐτὴν δύνανται μεταβάλλειν τε καὶ  
μετασχηματίζειν καὶ μεταπλάττειν ἄλλοτε ἄλλως· καὶ δὴ καὶ μετάθεσιν 10  
ἀπ' ἄλλων εἰς ἄλλα ἐπιδέχονται τῶν ἐν τοῖς κατὰ μέρος δυνάμεων· ἢ δὲ  
τοιαύτη τῶν ἐνεργειῶν ποικιλία καὶ τῶν πολλῶν ὕλικῶν δυνάμεων σύν-  
θεσις οὐχ ὅπως θείας δημιουργίας τῷ παντὶ κεχώριται, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς  
φυσικῆς ἀπεργασίας· καὶ γὰρ ἡ φύσις ἀθρόως καὶ ἅμα ποιεῖ τὰ οἰκεία  
[171] ἔργα, ἀπλαῖς τε καὶ ἀσυνθέτοις | ἐνεργείαις πάντα ἐπιτελεῖ. Λείπεται οὖν 1  
τεχνικὴν εἶναι δὴ σύμμιξιν τὴν τοιαύτην κατασκευὴν περὶ τὸ τελευταῖον  
καὶ περιφανὲς ῥεῦμα οὐράνιον καὶ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς οὐρανίας φερόμενα φύσεως.

29 Διὰ τί δὴ οὖν αὐτὸς μὲν ὁ ταῦτα δρῶν εἰδωλοποιὸς ἀνὴρ  
ἑαυτὸν ἀφίησι βελτιόνα ὄντα καὶ ἐκ βελτιόνων γεγονότα, τοῖς δὲ ἀψύ- 5  
χοις εἰδώλοις καὶ μόνη τῇ ἐμφάσει τῆς ζωῆς ἐπιπνεομένοις, ἁρμονία τε  
ἐπισκευαστῇ καὶ πολυνιδεῖ συνεχομένοις ἔξωθεν, ἐφημέροις τε ἀτεχνῶς  
οὖσιν ἀποπιστεύειν φαίνεται; πότερον τὸ γνήσιον καὶ ἀληθές ἐν αὐτοῖς

[169].6 ἐν<sup>1</sup> M et s. v. V<sup>2</sup>: om. V || 10 ἥς VM: οἷς (ἥς p. n.) s. v. V<sup>2</sup> ||  
11 ἐπάρχει] ὑπάρχει cj. Boulliau i. m. U et B<sup>3</sup> || [170].5 αὐτὰς scripsi: αὐτὰ  
VM || 10 καὶ δὴ καὶ V: καὶ δὴ M || [171].3 καὶ τὰ cj. Gale: τὰ VM καὶ  
περὶ τὰ V<sup>2</sup> || 5 καὶ M: om. V || 7 ἐπισκευαστῇ VM ἐπισκευαστοῦ (ου s.  
v.) V<sup>2</sup> | ἀτεχνῶς VM: ἀτέχνως scr. Gale Parthey

as it appears. For as there is indeed an unlimited range of powers belonging to the celestial gods, one genus is the lowest of all in them, that is, the physical. And of this, in turn, the part that is instantiated in seminal reasons and prior to them in the unchanging forms, takes the lead by itself prior to creation. But another part, in both perceptible and visible motions and powers, and in celestial emanations and qualities, rules over the whole visible order, of which this last part in all places about the earth rules over the visible realm of creation surrounding the earth. And its predominance over visible creation and in the qualities apparent through sensation from the emanations sent down from heaven is drawn on by many other skills, such as medicine and gymnastics, all of which share their own creativity with nature, and in particular, the making of images draws from these emanations some share of creativity, albeit a very obscure one. Then, in accordance with the truth, we must demonstrate that the image-maker does not use the astral revolutions or the powers inherent in them, or the powers found naturally around them, nor is he at all able to control them; rather he operates with those emanating last from nature in the visible (realm) about the extreme part of the universe, and does so purely by technical skill, and not by theurgic skill. For these emanations, I think, even though mingled with particular matter, are able to change, reshape, and mould it differently at different times; and what is more, they admit change from these partial powers into others in turn. But such a diversity of activities and combination of many material powers are remote not only from divine creation, but even from the activity of nature. For nature performs its own works suddenly and at once, and accomplishes all with simple and uncomplicated activities. It remains, then, that such a state be an artificial mixture concerned with the ultimate and visible celestial flux, and with things that are transported from the celestial nature.

**29** Why, then, does the image maker, who does these things, so undervalue himself, although superior and begotten from superior beings,<sup>237</sup> as to appear to trust in lifeless images, infused only by an outward appearance of life, being held together externally by a contrived and many-shaped harmony, and wholly ephemeral things? Does anything genuine or true exist in them?

<sup>237</sup> Cf. perhaps Plato, *Phaedr.* 253d on the “horses” of the divine souls.

ὑπάρχει; ἀλλ' οὐδὲν τῶν ὑπὸ ἀνθρωπίνης τέχνης συμπλαττομένων εἰλικρινές ἐστι καὶ καθαρόν. Ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀπλοῦν καὶ μονοειδὲς τῆς ἐνεργείας 10 ἢ τῆς ὅλης συστάσεως ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐπικρατεῖ; παντὸς μὲν οὖν λείπει· κατὰ γὰρ τὴν φαινομένην σύνθεσιν ἐκ παντοδαπῶν καὶ ὑπεναντίων ποιότητων συμπεφόρηται. Ἀλλὰ δύναμεις τις ἀκραιφνῆς καὶ τελεία διαφανῆς ἐστὶν ἐν αὐτοῖς; οὐδαμῶς. Ἐπεὶ πολλαχόθεν ἐπικτήτῳ τι συγκεκρότηται τὸ [172] τοιοῦτον πληθὺς τῶν ἀπορροῶν ἀσθενὲς καὶ ἐξίτηλον ἐπιδεικνύμενον. 1 Ἀλλ' εἰ μὴ ταῦτα, τὸ μόνιμον πάρεστι τοῖς εἰδώλοις οἷς λέγουσιν οὗτοι; πολλοῦ γε καὶ δεῖ· ἐπεὶ ταῦτά γε πολὺ θάπτον τῶν ἐν κατόπτροις ὁρωμένων εἰδώλων ἀποσβέννυται. Ἐπιτεθέντος μὲν γὰρ τοῦ θυμιάματος ἀπὸ τῶν ἀναφερομένων ἀτμῶν συνίσταται εὐθύς· ἀνακραθέντος δὲ εἰς τὸν ὅλον 5 ἀέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ διαχυθέντος, καὶ αὐτὸ εὐθύς διαλέλνται, καὶ οὐδ' ἀκαρῇ πέφνκεν ἐπιμένειν.

Διὰ τί δὴ οὖν ἔσται περισπούδαστος ἀνδρὶ φιλοθεάμονι τῆς ἀληθείας ἢ περιττὴ αὕτη θαυματοποιία; ἐγὼ μὲν οὐδενὸς ἄξιαν αὐτὴν ἡγοῦμαι. Καὶ εἰ μὲν γινώσκουσα αὐτὰ ταῦτα ἐφ' οἷς ἐσπούδακε καὶ περὶ αὐτῶν 10 διατρίβει, τὰ πλάσματα τῆς παμπανοῦς ὕλης ἀσπάζεται, ἀπλοῦν ἂν ἔχει τὸ κακόν. Πλὴν ἐκεῖνό γε αὐτῇ ὑπάρξει, τὸ ἀφομοιωθῆναι τοῖς εἰδώλοις ἐν οἷς τὴν πίστιν ἐν αὐτοῖς ἴδρυσεν. Εἰ δὲ καὶ ὥς θεοῖς προσέχει τοῖς εἰ- [173] δώλοις τούτοις, οὔτε | λόγῳ ῥητὸν οὔτε ἔργῳ φορητὸν ἔσται τὸ ἄτοπον. 1 Οὐδέποτε γὰρ εἰς τὴν τοιαύτην ψυχὴν ἐπιλάμψει τις ἀγῇ θεία· οὔτε γὰρ πέφνκεν ἐνδίδοσθαι αὐτῇ τοῖς ἅπαξ ἀντιδρασθεῖσιν, οὔτε ἔχει χώραν εἰς ἣν δέξεται αὐτὴν τὰ κατεχόμενα ὑπὸ τῶν σκιοειδῶν φαντασμάτων· σκιαῖς οὖν συνέσται πολλαῖς ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας ἢ τοιάδε τῶν φαντασμάτων θαν- 5 ματουργία.

**30** Ἀλλὰ παρατηροῦσιν οὗτοι, φησί, τὴν τῶν οὐρανίων φορὰν, καὶ λέγουσι τίνος τῶν κατ' οὐρανὸν μετὰ τίνος ἢ τίνων πολεόντος ἔσται ψευδὴ τὰ μαντεῖα ἢ ἀληθῆ, καὶ τὰ δρώμενα ἄργα ἢ ἀπαγγελτικά ἢ ἀποτε-

[171].9-10 εἰλικρινές M: εἰλικρινόν (alt. ν ε σ) V<sup>c</sup> εἰλικρινός (ut vid.) V || [172].1 ἀπορροῶν cj. i. m. («οι») B<sup>4</sup>: ἀποριῶν VM || 6 ἀκαρῇ V: ἀκαρεῖ M || 13 ἐν αὐτοῖς M (cf. Deuteronom., 32, 37): ἐν ἑαυτοῖς V ἑαυτῆς cj. Gale || [173].3 ἀντιδρασθεῖσιν cj. Velsenius: ἀντιδρωθεῖσιν VM || 4 δέξεται M: δέζεται V || 5 πολλαῖς VM: πολλοσταῖς cj. Gale

No, indeed, nothing of the things shaped by human skill are simple and pure. Yet does the simplicity and the uniformity of the activity, or the composition of the whole (universe), dominate in them? They fail of it entirely:<sup>238</sup> for, according to their apparent composition, they are a jumble of motley and incompatible qualities. But is no pure and perfect power manifest in them? Not at all! For such a multitude of emanations is heterogeneous and artificial, knocked together, showing itself to be feeble and fading. Yet, if these things are not so, is there stability present in the images of which they speak? Far from it, since these things vanish more quickly than images seen in mirrors. For when incense is placed on an altar, images are formed from the vapours carried upwards, and when a vapour is mixed with the entire air and dispersed, the image is immediately dissolved, and its nature is such that not a bit of it remains.

Why, then, should this useless conjuring be so desired by a man who is a lover of the truth?<sup>239</sup> I consider it worth nothing. And if the soul, knowing these very things, is zealous for them, spends time with them, and clings to delusions of matter, which is wholly passive, it would be a simple evil. Except, that would be a danger for it, becoming similar to the images in which it has placed its trust. But if it regards these images as gods, the absurdity cannot be expressed in speech, or be endurable in action. For upon such a soul the divine ray never shines; for it is not in the nature of things that it give itself to those that once resisted it; nor does it have a place in which it receives the things possessed by shadowy phantasms: thus such a wonder-working of phantasms shall be joined with many shadows far from the truth.<sup>240</sup>

**30** “But these (image makers),” the letter says,<sup>241</sup> “observe the movement of the celestial bodies, and they tell, from the ranging of a given star with another or others around the heavens, whether the divination will be true or false, and whether the rites performed will be of no purpose, or have annunciatory power and

<sup>238</sup> See Plato, *Leg.* 728a2.

<sup>239</sup> φιλοθεάμονες τῆς ἀληθείας was a standard Platonist expression, derived from Plato, *Resp.* 475e4-5; 476a10. Cf. Iamblichus, *Protr.* 94.13; *Myst.* V.21.228.12-13; Proclus, *Theol. plat.* 1.35.2; 2.34.9; 3.97.6; 4.78.3; 5.39.1.

<sup>240</sup> Gale’s πολλοσταῖς, “shadows so many times removed from the truth,” is tempting. Des Places’s objection ad loc. is not wholly persuasive.

<sup>241</sup> See our note to I.11 on the use of the third person.

λεστικά. Ἄλλ' οὐδὲ τούτων ἔνεκα ἕξει τι τὰ φαντάσματα ταῦτα θεῖον. Καὶ 10  
 γὰρ τὰ ἔσχατα τῶν ἐν τῇ γενέσει κινεῖται τοῖς οὐρανίοις δρόμοις καὶ συμ-  
 πάσχει πρὸς τὰς ἀπ' αὐτῶν κατιούσας ἀπορροὰς· οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ εἴ τις  
 αὐτὰ μετ' ἀκριβείας ἐπισκέψαιτο, τὰναντία τούτων ἐπιδείκνυσιν. Ἄ γάρ  
 [174] | ἐστὶ παντάπασιν εὐμετάβλητα καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἕξωθεν κινήσεων παντοίως 1  
 μετατρέπεται ὥστε ἀργὰ ἢ χρηματιστικά ἢ ἐπαγγελτικά ἢ ἐπιτελεστικά  
 ἢ ἄλλοτε ἄλλοῖα ἀποτελεῖσθαι, πῶς ἔνεστι ταῦτα καὶ μικρᾶς τιнос μετέ-  
 χειν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς θείας δυνάμεως; τί οὖν; αἱ ἐνοῦσαι ἐν ταῖς ὕλαις δυνάμεις  
 στοιχεῖα τῶν δαιμόνων εἰσίν; οὐ μὲν οὖν· οὐδὲν γὰρ τῶν κατὰ μέρος αἰ- 5  
 σθητῶν σωμάτων γεννᾷ δαίμονας· πολὺ δὲ μᾶλλον ταῦτα γεννᾶται τε καὶ  
 φρουρεῖται ὑπὸ τῶν δαιμόνων. Ἄλλ' οὐδὲ ἀνθρωπὸς τις πλάσαι δύναται  
 ὥσπερ ἐκ μηχανῆς δαιμόνων τινὰς μορφάς, ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀνάπαλιν αὐτὸς μάλ-  
 λον πλάσσεται καὶ δημιουργεῖται ὑπὸ τῶν δαιμόνων, καθ' ὅσον αἰσθητοῦ  
 σώματος μετέχει. Ἄλλ' οὐδὲ ἐκ στοιχείων τῶν αἰσθητῶν συμπεφορημένον 10  
 τι πλῆθος ἀπογεννᾶται τὸ δαιμόνιον, ἀλλὰ πλέον θάτερον αὐτὸ τέ ἐστιν  
 ἀπλοῦν καὶ περὶ τὰ σύνθετα μονοειδῶς ἐνεργεῖ. Ὅθεν δὴ οὐδὲ πρεσβύ-  
 τερα ἕξει τὰ αἰσθητὰ ἑαυτοῦ οὐδὲ μονιμώτερα, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ πρεσβεῖα καὶ  
 [175] δυνάμει διαφέρον | τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς μεταδίδωσιν ἣν δύναται δέχεσθαι δια- 1  
 μονήν. Πλὴν εἰ μὴ τὰ εἰδῶλα δαίμονας ἐπονομάζεις, οὐκ ὀρθῶς ἐπισύρων  
 τὴν τοιαύτην κλῆσιν.

Ἄλλη μὲν γάρ ἐστιν ἡ τῶν δαιμόνων φύσις ἄλλη δὲ ἡ τῶν εἰδώλων·  
 τάξεις τε αὐτῶν ἑκατέρων πάμπολυ διέστηκεν. Καὶ δὴ καὶ ὁ τῶν εἰδώλων 5  
 χορηγὸς διάφορος ἐστὶ παρὰ τὸν μέγαν ἡγεμόνα τῶν δαιμόνων. Ἀμέλει  
 καὶ σὺ τοσοῦτο συγχωρεῖς, μηδένα θεὸν ἢ δαίμονα λέγων ὑπ' αὐτῶν κα-  
 θέλκεσθαι. Τίνος οὖν ἔτι γένοιτο ἂν ἀξία διάπραξις ἱερὰ ἢ τοῦ μέλλοντος  
 πρόγνωσις, ἣτις ἄμοιρός ἐστι παντάπασι καὶ θεοῦ καὶ δαίμονος; ὥστε  
 εἰδέναι μὲν χρὴ καὶ ταύτην τὴν θαυματουργίαν τίνα ἔχει φύσιν, χρῆσθαι 10  
 δὲ ἢ πιστεύειν αὐτῇ μηδαμῶς.

**31** Ἔτι τοίνυν καὶ ταύτης ἐστὶ φανλοτέρα τῶν ἱεροπρεπῶν δρω-  
 μένων ἐξήγησις ἡ γένος τι ἀπατηλῆς φύσεως παντόμορφόν τε καὶ πο-  
 λύτροπον αἰτιωμένη τῆς μαγτείας ὑποκρινόμενον θεοὺς καὶ δαίμονας καὶ

[173].10 θεῖον V: τὸ θεῖον M || 13 ἐπιδείκνυσιν VM: ἀποδείκνυσιν cj.  
 B || [174].3-4 μετέχειν scr. A: μετέχην V μετέχη M || 11 αὐτό cj. Gale:  
 αὐτός VM || [175].8 ἂν ἀξία fec. V<sup>2</sup>: ἀναξία VM || 11 αὐτῇ M et (ἡ s. v.)  
 V<sup>2</sup>: αὐτοῦ V || 12 ἔτι M: ἔστι V | ἐστὶ VM: ἔτι fec. V<sup>2</sup> | ἱεροπρεπῶν ]  
 an ἱεροπρεπῶς?

be productive." But not even on this account will these phantasms possess anything divine. For even the lowest things in creation are moved by the celestial circuits, and are affected by the emanations that descend to them; nevertheless, if someone examines these with accuracy, they will show the contrary. For those things that are easily changeable and wholly modified by motions from without, so as to be rendered ineffective, or prophetic, or annunciatory, or capable of effecting their purpose, or achieving other purposes at different times, how shall these achieve even a small share of divine power in themselves? Well then? Are the powers inherent in matter daemonic elements? Certainly not! For no one of particular sensible bodies engenders daemons; far rather are these both generated and watched over by daemons. But not even is a human able to shape forms of daemons by any artificial means, but on the contrary, he himself is shaped and created by the daemons in so far as he shares in a perceptible body. Nor, again, when some magnitude has been cobbled together from sensible elements is the daemonic produced, but, on the contrary, the latter is itself simple and operates uniformly upon compound things. Hence, also, it will not have sensible things senior to itself or more lasting, but as it excels in age and power, it gives to sensible things such permanence as they are capable of receiving. If, however, you call the images "daemons," you use such a term wrongly, and in a careless way.

For the nature of daemons is one thing, that of images another; the rank of each of them (in the universe) is also very widely different. And indeed, the choral leader of the images is different from the great leader of the daemons. Of course, even you grant so much, when you say that no god or daemon is drawn down by them. Of what worth, then, would be a sacred action or foreknowledge of the future, which has absolutely no share of a god or of a daemon? Hence, it is necessary to know the nature of this wonder-making, but to make no use of it nor hold it true.

**31** Moreover, there is an interpretation of the sacred operations even worse than this, attributing the cause of divination to "a certain kind of deceptive nature, both protean and versatile, which takes on the forms of gods, daemons, and ghosts of the

[176] ψυχὰς τῶν τεθνη|κότων. Ἐρῶ δὴ σοι καὶ πρὸς ταῦτα λόγον ὃν ποτε ἤκου- 1  
σα, Χαλδαίων ποτὲ προφητῶν λεγόντων.

Ὅσοι μὲν θεοὶ τῆς ἀληθείας τῶν ἀγαθῶν εἰσι μόνως δοτήρες, μό-  
νοις τε τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς ἀνδράσι προσομιλοῦσι, καὶ τοῖς διὰ τῆς ἱερατικῆς 5  
ἀποκεκαθαρμένοις συγγίγνονται, ἐκκόπτουσί τε ἀπ' αὐτῶν πᾶσαν κακίαν  
καὶ πᾶν πάθος. Τούτων δὲ ἐπιλαμπόντων ἀφανὲς τὸ κακὸν καὶ δαιμόνιον  
ἐξίσταται τοῖς κρείττοσιν, ὥσπερ φωτὶ σκότος, καὶ οὐδὲ τὸ τυχὸν παρε-  
νοχλεῖ τοῖς θεουργοῖς· ἀφ' οὗ δὴ καὶ πᾶσαν ἀρετὴν δέχονται, καὶ χρηστοὶ  
τοῖς ἡθεσιν ἐπιτελοῦνται καὶ κόσμιοι, παθῶν τε ἀπαλλάττονται καὶ πά-  
σης ἀτάκτου κινήσεως, τῶν τε ἀθέων καὶ ἀνοσίων τρόπων καθαρεύουσιν. 10  
Ὅσοι δὲ εἰσιν αὐτοὶ τε ἀλιτῆριοι, καὶ ἀθέσμως καὶ ἀτάκτως ἐπιπηδῶσι  
τοῖς θείοις, δι' ἀτονίαν τε τῆς οἰκείας ἐνεργείας ἢ τῆς ὑπαρχούσης αὐ-  
τοῖς δυνάμεως ἔνδειαν οὐ δύνανται τῶν θεῶν τυγχάνειν, ἢ καὶ διὰ τινος  
μιασμοὺς ἀπείργονται τῆς πρὸς τὰ ἄχραντα πνεύματα συνουσίας, οὕτω  
[177] τοῖς κακοῖς πνεύ|μασι συνάπτονται, πληρούμενοί τε ἀπ' αὐτῶν τῆς κακί- 1  
στης ἐπιπνοίας πονηροὶ τε καὶ ἀνόσιοι γίνονται, ἡδονῶν μὲν ἀκολάστων  
πλήρεις, κακίας δὲ ἀνάμεστοι, τρόπων τε ἀλλοτρίων τοῖς θεοῖς ζηλωταί,  
καὶ τὸ ὄλον φάναι, παραπλήσιοι τοῖς πονηροῖς δαίμοσι γιγνόμενοι μεθ' ὧν 5  
συμφύονται.

Οὗτοι δὴ οὖν παθῶν μεστοὶ καὶ κακίας ὑπάρχοντες διὰ συγγένειαν  
ἔλκουσι τὰ πονηρὰ εἰς ἑαυτοὺς πνεύματα, καὶ αὐτοὶ πρὸς κακίαν πᾶ-  
σαν ὑπ' αὐτῶν ἐγείρονται, συναύξονται τε ὑπ' ἀλλήλων οὕτως, καθάπερ  
τις κύκλος ἀρχὴν τελευτῇ συνάπτων καὶ ἀνταποδιδόνς τὴν ἴσην ἀμοιβὴν 10  
ὡσαύτως. Ἄ τοῖνυν τῆς ἀνοσιουργίας ἐστὶν ἀσεβῆ πταίσματα, ἀτάκτως

[176].3 μόνως M: μόνων V || 12-13 αὐτοῖς (οι s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: αὐτῆς VM ||  
13 δύνανται V: δύνανται M | ἢ VM: εἰ cj. B

dead.”<sup>242</sup> I shall tell you, indeed, the account I once heard about these matters from the mouths of Chaldaean prophets.

Whoever are gods in the true sense, they alone are the givers of good things, and associate only with good men, and mingle with those purified by the sacred science, and they remove from them every vice and passion. When these shine forth, that which is evil and daemonic disappears and makes way for superior beings, just as darkness before light, and does not trouble the theurgists even occasionally—indeed, they receive from it every virtue, and become perfectly good and orderly; they are freed from passions, and from every unruly impulse, and are purified from godless and impious habits. But as many as are themselves guilty of crime, they fall upon and assault the divine in a lawless and disorderly manner, and, owing to the debility of their proper activity or the deficiency of their inherent power, are not able to attain to the gods. Or, as they are excluded from association with undefiled spirits because of these pollutions, they thus attach themselves to evil spirits, and, being filled by them with the most evil inspiration, they become evil and unholy, gorged with licentious pleasures, full of vice, eager for habits foreign to the gods, and, to sum up, they become akin to the wicked daemons to whom they have become attached.

These, then, being full of passion and evil, draw evil spirits to themselves because of kinship, and are excited by them toward every vice, and so growing together, just like some kind of circle joining beginning to end, they render in like manner an equal exchange.<sup>243</sup> So, then, of the impious blunders of wickedness,

<sup>242</sup> Many Christian writers claimed that possession by dead spirits was the real explanation behind oracular inspiration, e.g. Justin Martyr, *Apol.* 18.1.1–4; cf. Josephus *J.W.* 7.6. There is little or no mention in pagan sources of possession or inspiration by the dead, even in the context of hero-worship. Plato’s Socrates at *Phaed.* 80e–81d posits the existence of spirits undergoing punishment for their excessive attachment to the body by being forced to remain permanently attached to corporeality even after death. “Abamon” mentions spirits who wander the earth at IV.13.198, and Saloustios (= Sallustius) alludes to these wandering spirits at *De dis* 19.2, as does Proclus at *Comm. Resp.* 1.119.18–21; cf. *ET* prop. 210. However, there is no mention of these spirits even causing trouble for others, let alone possessing them completely.

<sup>243</sup> Cf. VI.3.244 where “Abamon” implies that daemons and human souls are likened to one another during certain dubious methods of divination. Cf. also Proclus, *Mal.* 4.25, where he argues that the increasing activity of evil,



μὲν αὐτὰ προσφερόμενα τοῖς ἱεροῖς ἔργοις, ἀτάκτως δὲ πειρώμενα καὶ τῶν ἐπεισιόντων, καὶ ποτὲ μὲν, ὡς δοκεῖ, θεὸν ἄλλον ἀνθ' ἑτέρου ποιοῦντα ἐπικωμάζειν, τοτὲ δ' αὖ δαίμονας πονηροὺς ἀντὶ τῶν θεῶν εἰσκρίνοντα, οὗς δὴ καὶ καλοῦσιν ἀντιθέους, ταῦτα μηδέποτε ἐν λόγῳ τῷ περὶ τῆς  
 [178] ἱερατικῆς μαντείας τίθεσο. | Ἐναντιώτερον γὰρ ἐστὶ δήπου τῷ κακῷ τὸ ἀγαθὸν μᾶλλον ἢ τῷ μὴ ἀγαθῷ. 1

Ὡσπερ οὖν οἱ ἱερόσυλοι τῇ θρησκείᾳ τῶν θεῶν πάντων μάλιστα μάχονται, οὕτω καὶ οἱ συνόντες τοῖς ἀπατεῶσι καὶ τοῖς τῆς ἀκολασίας αἰτίοις δαίμοσι, μαχόμενοι δήπου πρὸς τοὺς θεουργοὺς ὑπάρχουσι· τοῦ- 5 τοις γὰρ πᾶν μὲν πνεῦμα πονηρὸν ἐξίσταται καὶ ἀνατρέπεται ἄρδην, πᾶσα δὲ κακία καὶ πᾶν πάθος ἐκκόπτεται παντάπασιν, καθαρὰ δὲ μετουσία τῶν ἀγαθῶν πάρεστιν ἐν τοῖς καθαροῖς, ἄνωθεν δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ πυρὸς πληροῦνται τῆς ἀληθείας· οἷς οὐδὲν ἐμπόδιον γίγνεται ἀπὸ τῶν κακῶν πνευμάτων, οὐδ' εἰς τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς ἀγαθὰ κώλυμα· οὐδέ τις τῦφος ἢ θωπεία ἢ ἀτμῶν 10 ἀπόλαυσις ἢ βίας ἰσχυρὸς παρενοχλεῖ· ἀλλὰ πάντα ὥσπερ εἰ κεραυνίῳ τινὶ βολῇ πληγέντα ἀναφῶς ὑπείκει καὶ ὑποχωρεῖ, μηδὲ προσπελάσαι αὐτοῖς δυνάμενα. Ἐν οὖν τοῦτό ἐστὶ τὸ ἄχραντον καὶ ἱερατικὸν θεῖον τε ὡς ἀληθῶς γένος τῆς μαντείας· καὶ τοῦτο οὐχ, ὡς σὺ λέγεις, διαιτητοῦ δεῖται ἢ ἐμοῦ ἢ ἄλλον τινός, ἢν' αὐτὸ ἐκ πολλῶν προκρίνω, ἀλλ' αὐτὸ ἐξήρηται 15 πάντων, | ὑπερφυῆς αἰδίδιον προϋπάρχον, οὐδὲ παρὰ θεσὶν τινα ἐπιδεχόμε- 1 νον οὕτε ὑπεροχὴν τινος ἐν πολλοῖς προτεταγμένην· ἀλλ' ἀπολέλυται <καὶ>

[177].11 ἀτάκτως V: ἀτάκτων M | καὶ VM: καὶ ὑπὸ cj. Gale || 13 τοτὲ VM (cf. Deubner p. 641): ποτὲ cj. B || [178].1 τῷ κακῷ V<sup>2</sup> (utroque v delete): τῶν κακῶν VM || [179].2 προτεταγμένην M: προστεταγμένην V | ἀπολέλυται scripsi: ἀπόλλυται VM ἀπολύεται cj. Gale | καὶ add. cj. Westerink

some are introduced in a disorderly manner into the sacred works, while others make a disorderly approach also to what presents itself to them, and sometimes, so it seems, make one god welcome to their feast instead of another, and on occasion cause evil daemons to enter instead of gods, whom they call “anti-gods;”<sup>244</sup> you should never propose these things in a discourse about sacred divination. For the good is surely more opposed to the bad than to the not-good.<sup>245</sup> Thus, just as they who commit sacrilege above all combat the cult of the gods, so they who associate with daemons who are deceitful and causes of licentiousness are obviously in conflict with the theurgists. For from these every evil spirit retreats and is wholly overthrown, and every evil and every passion is wholly removed; and a pure participation in the goods is present in those purified, and they are filled from above with the fire of truth. For them no hindrance from evil spirits arises, nor any impediment for the goods of the soul; not yet does any delusion, or flattery, or enjoyment of vapours, or the force of violence cause (much) annoyance to them. But all of these withdraw and retire without so much as laying a hand on them, as if struck by some lightning bolt, and are unable to approach them. This, then, is one kind of mantic, which is undefiled and sacerdotal, and truly divine; and “this does not need,” as you say, “either myself or anyone else as umpire, in order that I prefer it to any others;” but it is itself entirely removed from all, supernatural, and eternally pre-existent, neither admitting any comparison nor pre-eminence among many; it is free from all this, and takes precedence over

which is originally a privation, renders it a more powerful force; at 4.33–5.3 Proclus argues that souls are adversely affected by evil as it increases due to the lack of presence of the good.

<sup>244</sup> ἀντίθεος was originally a Homeric epithet meaning “equal to a god;” see *Il.* 5.629, 663; 11.140; *Od.* 6.241, 331; 8.518. Later, however, it came to mean “contrary to the gods;” see e.g. Athenagoras, *Leg.* 24.2.6; Athanasius, *Ep. Marcell.* 27.460.21; *Tom.* 28.620.36; Aelius Aristides, 104.28–105.1; Libanius, *Or.* 2.59.6; *Declam.* 20.1.5.5; Lucian, *Tox.* 2.19; Photius, *Lex.* 400b14. Cumont (1956, 152, 266 n. 36) has argued that the term is Zoroastrian, and the later conception of it in strongly dualistic terms certainly may betray this influence. The term is also found at *PGM VII.* 628–642, where the practitioner prays to be sent “the true Asclepius, and not some deceitful daemon as an ἀντίθεος.”

<sup>245</sup> Cf. X.2.287.11–13.

καθ' ἑαυτὸ μονοειδὲς πάντων προηγείται. Ὅτι δεῖ καὶ σὲ καὶ πᾶς ὅστις ἐσ-  
 τι γνήσιος τῶν θεῶν ἐραστὴς ἐπιδοῦναι ἑαυτὸν ὅλον· ἐκ γὰρ τοῦ τοιούτου  
 τρόπον παραγίνεται ἅμα τε καὶ ἐν ταῖς μαντείαις ἡ ἄπταιστος ἀλήθεια 5  
 καὶ ἐν ταῖς ψυχαῖς ἡ τελεία ἀρετή. Μετὰ τούτων δὲ ἀμφοτέρων δίδεται  
 τοῖς θεουργοῖς ἡ πρὸς τὸ νοητὸν πῦρ ἄνοδος, ὃ δὴ καὶ τέλος δεῖ πάσης  
 μὲν προοργάνωσιν πάσης δὲ θεουργικῆς πραγματείας προτίθεσθαι.

Μάτην οὖν ἐπεισάγεις τὴν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀθέων δόξαν, ὥς ἄρα τὴν πᾶσαν  
 μαντείαν ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ δαίμονος ἡγοῦνται ἐπιτελεῖσθαι· οὔτε γὰρ ἄξιον 10  
 αὐτῶν μνημονεύειν ἐν ταῖς περὶ θεῶν ἐπιστάσεσι, καὶ ἅμα ἀμαθεῖς εἰσιν  
 [180] οἳ τῆς τοῦ ἀληθοῦς τε καὶ ψευδοῦς διακρίσεως διὰ | τὸ ἐν σκότῳ τὴν 1  
 ἀρχὴν τεθράφθαι, τὰς τε ἀρχάς, ἀφ' ὧν παραγίνονται ταῦτα, οὐδέποτε  
 δύνανται διαγιγνώσκειν. Καὶ μέχρι δὴ τούτων τὰ περὶ τοῦ τρόπου τῆς  
 μαντείας ἡμῖν διωρισμένα ἐχέτω τέλος.

all according to its uniform self. And it is proper for you and everyone who is a genuine lover of the gods to surrender himself to it wholly. For in such a fashion arises, at the same time, both infallible truth in oracles, and perfect virtue in souls. With both of these, ascent to the intelligible fire is granted to theurgists, a process which indeed must be proposed as the goal of all foreknowledge and of every theurgic operation.

In vain, then, do you introduce the opinion of the atheists that “all divination is accomplished by the evil daemon.”<sup>246</sup> For such people do not deserve to be mentioned in discussions about the gods, and they are at the same time both ignorant of the distinction between truth and falsity, having been nurtured in the dark from the beginning, and not able to discern the principles from which these things come into being. And let our elucidations about the manner of divination have an end at this point.

<sup>246</sup> ἄθεοι was a term applied to the Christians by the pagan camp. Cf. X.2 for more allusions to the Christian anti-theurgists.

## IV

1 Ἄγε δὴ οὖν ὅπως ἐφεξῆς καὶ τὰς δοκούσας ἐναντιώσεις ἐπι- 5  
 σκεψώμεθα, τίνες εἰσὶ καὶ τίνα ἔχουσι λόγον. Καὶ δῆτα ἐὰν ὀλίγῳ πλείονα  
 διεξιῶμεν περὶ τινων, ὡς ἂν ἐπ' ἐξουσίας ἰδίας καὶ κατὰ σχολὴν ποιούμε-  
 νοι τοὺς λόγους, ἐπιμένειν δεῖ σε προθύμως καὶ καρτερεῖν. Περὶ γὰρ τῶν  
 μεγίστων μαθημάτων μεγάλας ἀνίστασθαι δεῖ καὶ τὰς σπονδάς, χρόνῳ τε 10  
 ἐν πολλῷ δι' ἀκριβείας βεβασανισμένας, εἰ μέλλοις αὐτὸ τελέως γνῶσε-  
 σθαι· σὺ μὲν οὖν κατὰ τὴν παροῦσαν ὑπόθεσιν, ὥσπερ ἤρξω, πρότεινε τὰς  
 [181] ἐμποιοῦσας ἀπορίαν διαμφισβητήσεις, ἐγὼ δ' ἐν τῷ μέρει δώσω λόγον 1  
 σοι· λέγε δὴ οὖν· ὅ τι δὴ πάννυ με θράττει, πῶς ὡς κρείττονες παρακα-  
 λούμενοι ἐπιτάττονται ὡς χείρονες· ἐγὼ δέ σοι ἐρῶ τὴν ὅλην περὶ τῶν  
 καλουμένων ἀξίαν λόγον διαίρεσιν, ἅψ' ἥς ἐνέσται σοι διορισμὸς σαφὴς  
 τοῦ τε δυνατοῦ καὶ τοῦ ἀδυνάτου περὶ ὧν ἠρώτησας. 5

Θεοὶ μὲν γὰρ καὶ ὅσοι κρείττονες ἡμῶν βουλήσει τῶν καλῶν ἀφθό-  
 νῳ τε τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἀποπληρώσει μετ' εὐμενείας τοῖς ἀγίοις χαρίζονται  
 τὰ προσήκοντα, οἰκτείροντες μὲν τοὺς τῶν ἱερατικῶν ἀνδρῶν πόρους, τὰ  
 δ' οἰκεῖα ἐαυτῶν γεννήματα καὶ θρέμματα καὶ παιδεύματα ἀσπαζόμενοι.  
 Τὰ δὲ μέσα γένη κρίσεως ἔφορα τυγχάνει· συμβουλεύει τε ἃ δεῖ ποιεῖν 10

[180].10 αὐτὸ ] αὐτὰ cj. Gale || [181].2 δῆ² M: δὲ V || 6-7 ἀφθόνῳ  
 cj. Gale: ἀφθόνων VM || 7 χαρίζονται VM: χωρίζονται (ω s. v., sed del. V<sup>r</sup>)  
 V<sup>c</sup>

## BOOK IV

1 Well then, let us next turn our attention to the objections that it occurs to you to raise, to see what they are and what logical force they possess. And, indeed, if we deal with some of them at slightly greater length than seems proper, so as to give the impression of discoursing self-indulgently and with infinite leisure, you must simply have patience and bear with us. For the greatest subjects of study deserve to attract correspondingly great attention, and to be given close examination over a substantial period of time, if one is going to attain to a perfect understanding of them. So you, then, in conformity with the lines you have laid down, propound the problems that have been giving you difficulty and I, in turn, will render you a proper account of them. State your point, then. “A thing that very much troubles me is this: how does it come about that we invoke the gods as our superiors, but then give them orders as if they were our inferiors?”<sup>247</sup> I will explain to you the entire principle of distinction, so far as it is worth going into, on the question of how powers are invoked, so that from this you may have a clear basis for determining what is possible and what is impossible on the subject of your enquiry.

The gods and the classes of being superior to us, through a wish for the good, and with an ungrudging fulfilment of benefits,<sup>248</sup> bestow with benevolence towards the saints<sup>249</sup> what is fitting to them, taking pity upon the labours of priestly men, and embracing their own offspring, nurselings and pupils. The role of the median classes of being is to preside over the processes of

<sup>247</sup> Are we to suppose that this is a verbatim quotation from Porphyry? It seems to us more probable that it is a dramatised version of a point made by Porphyry in his letter, put in this form to accentuate the rhetorical ploy of presenting Porphyry as the pupil seeking enlightenment.

<sup>248</sup> This language is deliberately reminiscent of Plato’s characterisation of the Demiurge at *Timaeus* 29e.

<sup>249</sup> That is to say, the practitioners of theurgy: οἱ ἄγιοι is used by Origen to describe consecrated members of the Christian community, e.g. *Princ.* 1.3.5, Gk. frg. 9, and this usage can be traced back to early Christianity (see, e.g., Acts 9:13, 32, 41; 26:10; Rom 1:7; 8:27; 12:13; 15:25–26, 31; 16:2, 15; 1 Cor 1:2).

καὶ τίνων ἀπέχεσθαι προσήκει, καὶ πρὸς μὲν τὰ δίκαια ἔργα συναίρεται, διακωλύει δὲ τὰ ἄδικα, πολλοὺς τε τῶν ἐπιχειρούντων ἀφαιρεῖσθαι τι τῶν ἀλλοτρίων παρὰ δίκην ἢ λυμαίνεσθαι τινα πλημμελῶς ἢ ἀπολλύναι, αὐ-  
 [182] τοὺς ἐποίησε παθεῖν ταῦτα οἷα ἄλλους διανοοῦντο ἐργάζεσθαι. | Ὅτι δὲ 1  
 δὴ τι καὶ ἄλλο ἀλόγιστον καὶ ἄκριτον γένος τῶν παραγιγνομένων, ὃ μίαν ἀριθμῶ δύναμιν κατενείματο διὰ τὴν ἐφ' ἐκάστοις τοῖς μέρεσι διανομὴν ἐφ' ἐκάστω τῶν ἔργων ἐπιτεταγμένων. Ὡς περ οὖν μαχαίρας ἔργον ἐστὶ τὸ τέμνειν καὶ οὐδὲν ἄλλο ποιεῖ ἢ τοῦτο, οὕτω καὶ τῶν ἐν τῷ παντὶ διηρη- 5  
 μένων πνευμάτων κατὰ φύσεως μεριστὴν ἀνάγκην τὸ μὲν διαιρεῖ, ἄλλο δὲ συνάγει τὰ γιγνόμενα. Γνώριμον δὲ τοῦτό ἐστι καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν φαινομένων· τὰ γὰρ Χαράρνεα λεγόμενα ἀφίησί τι πνεῦμα ἀφ' ἐαυτῶν πᾶν τὸ ἐμπίπτον ἀδιακρίτως δυνάμενον φθείρειν. Οὕτω δὲ οὖν καὶ ἀφανῆ τινα πνεύματα, διαλαχόντα ἄλλα ἄλλην δύναμιν, ἐκεῖνο μόνον πέφυκε ποιεῖν ὥς περ 10  
 τέτακται. Εἰ δὲ τις παραλαβὼν τὰ συντελοῦντα τεταγμένως εἰς τὸ πᾶν ἀλλαχοῦ μετατρέψει καὶ διαπράξαιτό τι παρὰ νόμους, οἰκεία τότε ἔσται τοῦ κακῶς χρωμένου βλάβη.  
 [183] | 2 Καὶ οὗτος μὲν ἄλλος τρόπος λόγων· ὃ δὲ νυνὶ πρόκειται 1  
 σκοπεῖν, ἐνίοτε ὁρῶμεν γιγνόμενον. Τὸ γὰρ τῶν ἐπιτάξεων συμβαίνει περὶ τὰ μὴ χρώμενα ἰδίῳ λόγῳ πνεύματα μηδὲ κρίσεως ἀρχὴν ἔχοντα. Καὶ

[181].13-14 αὐτοὺς cj. Parthey: αὐτοῖς VM || [182].4 ἐπιτεταγμένων M: ἐπιτεταγμένον V ἐπιτεταγμένην cj. Gale || [183].2 ἐπιτάξεων V: ἐπιτάξεως M

judgement. They advise as to what is to be done, and from what one should abstain; they co-operate with just actions, while they hinder unjust ones, and in the case of many, who attempt unjustly to appropriate what does not belong to them, or to injure someone improperly, or even to kill them, they cause them to suffer the sort of things that they were planning to inflict on others. There is, however, another class of being from among those which surround us,<sup>250</sup> devoid of reason and judgement, which has been allotted just one power, in the apportionment of tasks which has been prescribed<sup>251</sup> for each entity in each of the parts (of the universe). Even as, then, the role of a knife is to cut,<sup>252</sup> and it does nothing else but this, so also, of those spirits that are distributed about the universe, according to a particular natural necessity, one divides while another brings together things in the realm of becoming. This truth can be observed also from the evidence of our senses; for the so-called “caves of Charon” emit from themselves a certain vapour, capable of destroying indiscriminately anything that falls into them.<sup>253</sup> Even so, then, there are certain invisible spirits, each allotted different spheres of operation, who are naturally adapted to perform only that role to which they are assigned. If then someone, having taken up that which concords with the order of the universe, turns that to another end, and performs some act contrary to law, the harm resulting from that wicked act will appropriately recoil upon him.

2 But that is another aspect of the question. What it is now our purpose to examine, we sometimes see happening. For these commands are addressed to spirits that have no reason or principle of judgement of their own. And yet there is nothing odd about

<sup>250</sup> These seem to be distinct from the evil daemons discussed just above at III.31.176–178. The present entities are not disorderly, or positively evil; they are simply limited to one or another particular function in the universe, and should not be diverted from that.

<sup>251</sup> Reading ἐπιτεταγμένων with Gale, for the ἐπιτεταγμένον of the MSS.

<sup>252</sup> Probably a reminiscence of Plato, *Resp.* 353a.

<sup>253</sup> Such cavities are mentioned by Strabo, *Geog.* 12.8.17; 14.1.11 and 44; [Aristotle], *Mund.* 395b28, both of whom mention various well-known ones in Asia Minor. Cicero, *Div.* 1.79 and Pliny, *Nat.* 2.95.208 give a number of Italian examples.



τοῦτο οὐκ ἀπαντᾷ παραλόγως. Φύσιν γὰρ ἔχουσα λογίζεσθαι ἡμῶν ἢ διάνοια καὶ διακρίνειν ἥπερ ἔχει τὰ πράγματα, πολλὰς τε δυνάμεις ζωῆς ἐν 5 ἑαυτῇ συλλαβοῦσα, τοῖς ἀλογίστοις καὶ κατὰ μίαν τοῖς ἐπιτελουμένοις ἐνέργειαν ἐπιτάττειν εἶωθεν. Καλεῖ μὲν οὖν αὐτὰ ὡς κρείττονα, διότι ἀπὸ τοῦ περιέχοντος ἡμᾶς παντός κόσμου τὰ συντελοῦντα πρὸς τὰ ὅλα περὶ τὰ κατεχόμενα ἐν τοῖς μεριστοῖς ἔλκειν ἐπιχειρεῖ· ἐπιτάττει δὲ ὡς χείροσι, διότι καὶ μέρη τινὰ πολλάκις τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ καθαρώτερα καὶ 10 τελειότερα ἐμφύεται τῶν ἀνηκόντων εἰς τὸν ὅλον κόσμον· οἷον εἰ τὸ μὲν εἴη νοερόν, τὸ δ' ὅλον ἄψυχον ἢ φυσικόν, τότε γὰρ τοῦ ἐπὶ πλεῖον διατείνοντος τὸ ἐπ' ἔλαττον διῆκον εἰς ἐξουσίαν ἐστὶ κυριώτερον, εἰ καὶ ὅτι μάλιστα ἀπολείποιο αὐτοῦ τῷ μεγέθει καὶ πλήθει τῆς ἐπικρατείας.

[184] | Ἐχει δὲ καὶ ἄλλον λόγον ταῦτα τοιοῦτον. Τῆς ὅλης θεωργίας 1 διττόν ἐστι πρόσχημα, τὸ μὲν ὡς παρ' ἀνθρώπων προσαγόμενον, ὅπερ δὴ τηρεῖ καὶ τὴν ἡμετέραν τάξιν ὡς ἔχει φύσεως ἐν τῷ παντί, τὸ δὲ κρατυνόμενον τοῖς θεοῖς συνθήμασι καὶ ἄνω μετέωρον δι' αὐτῶν τοῖς κρείττοσι συναπτόμενον, περιεγόμενόν τε ἐμμελῶς ἐπὶ τὴν ἐκείνων δια- 5 κόσμωσιν, ὃ δὴ δύναται εἰκότως καὶ τὸ τῶν θεῶν σχῆμα περιτίθεσθαι. Κατὰ τὴν τοιαύτην οὖν διαφορὰν εἰκότως καὶ ὡς κρείττονας καλεῖ τὰς ἀπὸ τοῦ παντός δυνάμεις, καθόσον ἐστὶν ὁ καλῶν ἀνθρώπος, καὶ ἐπιτάττει αὐταῖς αὖθις, ἐπειδὴ περιβάλλεται πως διὰ τῶν ἀπορρήτων συμβόλων τὸ ἱερατικὸν τῶν θεῶν πρόσχημα. 10

3 Ἀληθέστερον δ' ἔτι τούτων διαλύοντες τὰ διηπορημένα, ἀφαιρεῖν ἀξιοῦμεν τὰς ὡς ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων φαινομένας ἐν τῷ καλεῖν παρακλήσεις

[183].7 ὡς M: ὧν V || 14 αὐτοῦ V: αὐτῷ M || [184].8-9 ἐπιτάττει cj. Gale: ἐπιτάττειν VM

this situation. For since our mind<sup>254</sup> has a natural power of reasoning and of discerning the nature of things, and since it gathers within itself a multiplicity of life-faculties, it is accustomed to giving orders to irrational beings, which are set to carry out just one operation at a time. So it invokes them, on the one hand, as superiors, because it is trying to attract, from the world surrounding us, those beings which contribute to the whole, to concern themselves with what inheres in individual things; it gives them orders, on the other hand, as to inferiors, because often certain parts of what is in the world are naturally purer and more perfect than those which extend to the world as a whole. For example, if the former is endowed with intelligence, while the whole is soulless or endowed merely with the principle of growth,<sup>255</sup> in that case the entity of more restricted extension disposes of more discretionary power than that which is of greater extension, even though it may fall far short of it in size and abundance of force.

There is another explanation that one might give of this, and that is the following: the whole of theurgy presents a double aspect. On the one hand, it is performed by men, and as such observes our natural rank in the universe; but on the other, it controls divine symbols, and in virtue of them is raised up to union with the higher powers, and directs itself harmoniously in accordance with their dispensation, which enables it quite properly to assume the mantle of the gods. It is in virtue of this distinction, then, that the art both naturally invokes the powers from the universe as superiors, inasmuch as the invoker is a man, and yet on the other hand gives them orders, since it invests itself, by virtue of the ineffable symbols, with the hieratic role of the gods.

**3** But in order to provide an even more accurate solution to your problems, we think it right, in our invocations, to eliminate such prayers as seem to be addressed to men, as well

<sup>254</sup> “Abamon” uses here the term *διάνοια*. In normal Platonist parlance it would refer to the discursive intellect, the very essence of which, one would think, is to reason; here, he must be using here in a more general sense—for something like consciousness.

<sup>255</sup> This is really the meaning of *ψύσις* here—the lowest level of soul, the growth-soul.

καὶ τὰς ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν ἔργων διανόσει μετὰ μεγάλης σπουδῆς ἐνδιδομένας ἐπιτάξεις. Εἰ γὰρ ἡ φιλίας ὁμονοητικῆς κοινωνία καὶ τις ἀδιάλυτος συμ-  
 [185] πλοκὴ τῆς ἐνώσεως συνέχει τὴν ἱερατικὴν ἀπεργασίαν, | ἢν ὄντως ἡ θεία 1  
 καὶ ὑπερέχουσα πᾶσαν τὴν γιγνωσκομένην κοινὴν ἀνθρώποις διάπραξιν, οὐδὲν τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων ἔργων ἐπ' αὐτῆς ἀρμόζει λεγόμενον, οὔτε τὸ προσκαλεῖν οὕτως, ὥς τὰ ἀφεστηκότα ἡμεῖς προσαγόμεθα, οὔτε τὸ κελεύειν τοιοῦτον ὁποῖον τοῖς κηχωρισμένοις, ὥς ἕτερον ἐξ ἐτέρων ἐγγχειρίζομεν. 5  
 ἢ αὐτὴ δέ τις ἐνέργεια κοινῶς αὐθαίρετος ἐλλάμπουσα τοῦ θείου πυρὸς αὐτόκλητός τε καὶ αὐτενέργητος δι' ὅλων ὡσαύτως ἐνεργεῖ τῶν μεταδιδόντων ὁμοῦ καὶ τῶν μεταλαμβάνειν αὐτῆς δυναμένων.

Πολὴ δὲ οὖν κρεῖττον ἐστὶ τὸ νυνὶ λεγόμενον, τὸ μὴ δι' ἐναντιώσεως ἢ διαφορότητος ἀποτελεῖσθαι τὰ τῶν θεῶν ἔργα, ὥσπερ δὴ τὰ γιγνόμενα 10  
 εἶωθεν ἐνεργεῖσθαι, ταυτότητι δὲ καὶ ἐνώσει καὶ ὁμολογίᾳ τὸ πᾶν ἔργον ἐν αὐτοῖς κατορθοῦσθαι. Ἐὰν μὲν οὖν καλοῦν ἢ καλούμενον ἢ ἐπιτάττον ἢ ἐπιταττόμενον ἢ κρεῖττον ἢ χειρὸν διαιρῶμεν, τὴν τῶν γενέσεων ἐπὶ τὰ τῶν θεῶν ἀγέννητα ἀγαθὰ μεταφερόμεν πως ἐναντιότητα, ἐὰν δὲ πάντων  
 [186] | τούτων ὡς γηγενῶν καθάπερ ἐστὶ δίκαιον ὑπερίδωμεν, τὸ δὲ κοινὸν καὶ 1  
 ἀπλοῦν ὡς τιμιώτερον ἀποδῶμεν τοῖς ὑπερέχουσι (τῆς) τῶν ἐνταῦθα ποι-  
 κιλίας, ἀνήρηται εὐθὺς ἡ πρώτη τῶν ζητημάτων τούτων ὑπόθεσις, ὥστε οὐδεμία περὶ αὐτῶν εἰλόγος ἀπολείπεται ἀμφισβήτησις.

4 Τί οὖν δὴ λέγομεν περὶ τῆς μετὰ ταύτην ἐπιζητήσεως, τί δί- 5  
 καιον δῆποτε μὲν ἀξιοῦσι τὸν θεραπεύοντα εἶναι οἱ καλούμενοι, αὐτοὶ δὲ τὰ ἄδικα κελευόμενοι δοῦν ὑπομένουσιν; πρὸς δὲ τοῦτο ἔχω περὶ τοῦ δικαιοπραγεῖν διαμφισβητήσαι, ὥς οὐχ ὁ αὐτὸς ὁρος ἡμῖν τε φαίνεται περὶ

[184].14 ἡ φιλίας (ἀ p. n., ἡ s. v.) V<sup>1</sup>: ἀφιλίας VM || [185].1 ἡ i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: ἡ VM || 5 τοῖς V: om. M || [186].2 τιμιώτερον M et (comp.) V: τιμιώτατα (compendio in V male resolutio) AZ | τῆς add. cj. Westerink || 5 δὴ M: δὴ τι V || 7 τοῦτο cj. Westerink: τοῦτω codd.

as injunctions forcefully delivered on the accomplishment of operations.<sup>256</sup> For if it is the communion of a friendship based on like-mindedness and an indissoluble bond of unity that gives coherence to the performance of hieratic rites, in order that they may be truly divine and transcend all action known and common to men, then the name of no human activities can apply to it, nor does one employ invocations in the way that one does in order to draw near to one things that are distant, nor to give orders to things separate from us, as when we take in hand one thing after another; but the same activity of the divine fire which shines universally on its own initiative, self-summoned and self-energising,<sup>257</sup> acts in the same way throughout all beings, both those which communicate their powers and those which are able to receive them.

Much better, then, is the principle I have just now laid down, that the works of the gods are not brought to completion in any mode of opposition or differentiation, in the way that works in the realm of generation are normally performed, but each work as a whole is accomplished on the divine level through identity and unity and concord. If, then, we make any distinction between invoker and invoked, or commander and commanded, or, in general, superior and inferior, we are in a way transferring the spirit of opposition to the ungenerated goods of the gods; but if, as is proper, we dismiss all such things as earthly, and if instead we attribute community and simplicity, as being more honourable, to those beings that transcend the variegation of this realm, then the primary basis for your queries is dissolved, so that no reasonable doubt is any longer left concerning them.

4 What, then, are we to say on the question following upon this, to wit, "Why do the entities summoned up require that the officiator be just, while they themselves put up with being bidden to commit injustice?"<sup>258</sup> In response to this, I would first raise an issue about the sense of the term "behave justly," since this does

<sup>256</sup> No doubt utterances such as we find throughout the magical papyri, accompanying a given magical rite.

<sup>257</sup> We have here a sequence of adjectives that have a distinctly Chaldaean ring, though they are not attested in surviving fragments; ἀντενέργητος is indeed attested first in Iamblichus and subsequently in Proclus.

<sup>258</sup> Plotinus addresses this at *Enn.* 4.4.30-39 in the course of his discussion of magic.

αὐτοῦ καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς. Ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς μὲν ἄτε δὴ ἐπὶ τὸ βραχύτατον ἀποβλέ-  
ποντες τὰ παρόντα πράγματα ἐπισκοποῦμεν καὶ τὸν ἐν ποσὶ βίον, τίς τέ 10  
ἐστι καὶ ὅπως γίγνεται· οἱ μέντοι κρείττονες ἡμῶν ὅλην τὴν ζωὴν τῆς  
ψυχῆς καὶ τοὺς προτέρους αὐτῆς βίους πάντας ἐπίστανται, καὶ εἴ τινα  
δὴ τιμωρίαν ἐπάγουσιν ἐκ παρακλήσεως τῶν καλούντων, οὐκ ἔξω τῆς  
δίκης ταύτην ἐπιφέρουσιν, ἀλλὰ στοχαζόμενοι τῶν ἐν προτέροις βίοις ἀμ-  
[187] αρτημάτων | τῆς ψυχῆς τῶν πασχόντων· ἅπερ οἱ ἄνθρωποι οὐχ ὁρῶντες 1  
νομίζουσιν αὐτοὺς ἀδίκως περιπίπτειν ταῖς συμφοραῖς αἷς πάσχουσιν.

5 Καὶ πρὸς τὴν πρόνοιαν δὲ τὸ αὐτὸ τοῦτο κοινῶς εἰώθασιν οἱ  
πολλοὶ προσapoεῖν, εἴ τινες παρὰ τὴν ἀξίαν κακῶς πάσχουσι μηδὲν ἡδι-  
κηκότες πρότερον. Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐνταῦθα δύνανται ἀναλογίζεσθαι τίς οὐσα ἢ 5  
ψυχὴ καὶ τίνα ἔχουσα τὴν ὅλην ζωὴν καὶ πόσα ἐν προτέροις βίοις διαμαρ-  
τήσασα τυγχάνει, καὶ εἰ ἄρα πάσχει ταῦτα ἅπερ ἐποίησε πρότερον· πολλὰ  
δὲ καὶ λανθάνει τὰς ἀνθρωπίνας διαγνώσεις ἀδικήματα, τοῖς δὲ θεοῖς ἐσ-  
τι γνῶριμα, ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ τὸν αὐτὸν σκοπὸν τοῖς ἀνθρώποις προτίθενται τῆς  
δικαιοσύνης. Ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν ἄνθρωποι τὴν ἰδίαν τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοπραγίαν καὶ 10  
τὴν κατὰ τοὺς καθεστῶτας νόμους καὶ τὴν κρατοῦσαν πολιτείαν διανομὴν  
τῆς ἀξίας ἀφορίζονται εἶναι δικαιοσύνην· οἱ μέντοι θεοὶ πρὸς τὴν ὅλην τοῦ  
κόσμου διάταξιν καὶ πρὸς τὴν συντέλειαν τοῖς θεοῖς τῶν ψυχῶν ἀποβλέ-  
ποντες, τὴν κρίσιν τῶν δικαιωμάτων ἐπιβάλλουσιν. Διόπερ δὴ ἄλλως μὲν  
[188] παρὰ τοῖς θεοῖς | ἄλλως δὲ παρ' ἡμῖν τῶν δικαίων ἢ κρίσις γίγνεται· καὶ 1  
οὐκ ἂν θανατάσαιμι εἰ μὴ ἐφικνούμεθα ἐν τοῖς πλείστοις τῆς ἅκρας καὶ  
τελειοτάτης τῶν κρειττόνων κρίσεως.

Τί δὲ κωλύει καθ' ἑαυτὸν ἐκάστω καὶ μετὰ τῆς ὅλης συγγενείας  
τῶν ψυχῶν παρὰ τοῖς θεοῖς πολὺ διαφερόντως δοκιμάζεσθαι τὸ δίκαιον; 5

[186].9 μὲν V: δὲ M || 12 πάντας cj. Gale: πάντες VM || [187].4 εἴ  
τινες VM: οἷτινες cj. B || 7 ταῦτα VM: an ταῦτά? || 14 ἄλλως V: ἄλλων  
M || [188].4 τί scr. Gale: τί (ἰ ex δ) V<sup>2</sup> τὸ VM

not appear to have the same definition when applied to us and to the gods. We, after all, in considering reality, look only to the shortest of scales, and to "the life before our feet," what it is and how it came to be, whereas the classes of being superior to us take cognisance of the whole life of our soul and all its previous lives, and if they send some punishment upon us on the invocation of those who petition them, they do not do this outside the bounds of justice, but taking into account offences committed in previous lives of the souls of the victims. It is only through failing to appreciate this that men consider themselves to be unjustly subjected to the misfortunes that they suffer.

5 Indeed, the general run of men commonly raise this same difficulty about providence, if people suffer ill undeservedly without having committed any previous injustice.<sup>259</sup> They are not in a position, however, to make a proper reckoning of the true nature of a given soul, and of what sort of life it has had as a whole, and how many crimes it may have committed in previous lives, and whether it is suffering due to its former actions. There are also many injustices, which escape the attention of men, but are known to the gods, since they do not even propound the same standard of justice as men. For men define justice as "the doing by each soul of its own proper activity,"<sup>260</sup> and as the dispensing of deserts according to the established laws and the prevailing political system; the gods, on the other hand, looking to the structure of the cosmos as a whole and to the overall relationship of souls with the gods, and it is on this basis that they make a judgement as to the apportionment of just deserts. It is for this reason, then, that the judgement of what is just is made differently by the gods from what we would make; and I would not be astonished if in most cases we did not attain to a full and complete understanding of the basis on which our superiors make their judgement.

But why, indeed, shouldn't what is just for each sole individual be reckoned very differently by the gods in each case, when taken with reference to the whole system of the relationships

<sup>259</sup> Plotinus deals with this issue extensively in his major treatise *On Providence* (*Enn.* 3.2-3).

<sup>260</sup> This plainly refers to the Platonic definition of justice worked out in *Republic* 4, though the term *αὐτοπραγία* (for *οἰκαιοπραγία*) is not found in Plato; it occurs only in the Platonic *Definitions* (411e), and then as part of a definition of *σωφροσύνη* rather than of *δικαιοσύνη*.

εἴπερ γὰρ ἡ κοινωνία τῆς αὐτῆς φύσεως ἔν τε σώμασι καὶ ἄνευ σωμάτων οὖσαις ταῖς ψυχαῖς συμπλοκὴν τινα τὴν αὐτὴν πρὸς τὴν τοῦ κόσμου ζωὴν καὶ τάξιν ἐναπεργάζεται κοινωνίαν, καὶ τὴν ἔκτισιν τῆς δίκης ἀναγκαῖον ἀπαιτεῖσθαι ἀφ' ὧν, καὶ μάλιστα ἡνίκα ἂν τὸ μέγεθος τῶν μιᾷ προϋπηργμένων ἀδικημάτων ὑπεραίρῃ τὴν ἀπὸ μιᾶς τῆς ἀκολούθου τοῖς 10 πλημμελήμασι τιμωρίας ἀποπλήρῳσιν· εἰ δέ τις καὶ ἄλλους προστιθεῖν διορισμούς, καθ' οὓς ἐπιδείκνυσιν ἑτέρως τὰ δίκαια παρὰ τοῖς θεοῖς ἔχοντα ἢ ὡς παρ' ἡμῖν διέγνωσται, γένοιτ' ἂν καὶ ἀπ' ἐκείνων ἔφοδος ἡμῖν ἐπὶ τὸ προκείμενον· ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ καὶ οἱ προειρημένοι μόνοι κανόνες ἐξαρκούσιν [189] εἰς τὸ | δηλῶσαι τὸ καθόλου καὶ πάντα περιέχον γένος τῆς ἐν ταῖς δίκαις 1 ἱατρείας.

6 Ἵνα τοίνυν ἐκ περισυίας διαγωνισώμεθα πρὸς τὴν νῦν λεγομένην ἀντίληψιν, δῶμεν εἰ βούλει καὶ τὸ ἐναντίον οὗ κατεσκευάσαμεν, ὡς 5 ἄδικά τινα δρᾶσθαι ἐν ταῖς κατὰ τὰς κλήσεις πραγματεαῖς· ὅτι τοίνυν οὐδὲ τούτων αἰτιατέον τοὺς θεοὺς αὐτόθεν μὲν πρόδηλον· οἱ γὰρ ἀγαθοὶ ἀγαθῶν εἰσιν αἴτιοι, κακοῦ δὲ παντὸς ἀνάτιοι· καὶ οἱ θεοὶ κατ' οὐσίαν ἔχουσι τὸ ἀγαθόν· οὐδὲν ἄρα ἄδικον ποιοῦσιν. Ἀλλ' ἄρα τὰ αἷτια τῶν 10 πλημμελῶς γιγνομένων ζητητέον· εἰ δὲ μὴ οἰοί τέ ἐσμεν εὑρεῖν αὐτά, οὐ χρὴ προῖεσθαι τὴν ἀληθῆ περὶ θεῶν ἔννοιαν, οὐδὲ διὰ τὰ ἀμφισβητούμενα 10 εἰ γίγνονται καὶ ὅπως γίγνονται ἀφίστασθαι χρὴ τῆς ὄντως ἐναργοῦς περὶ θεῶν ἐννοίας· πολὺ γὰρ βέλτιον ἀγνοεῖν προσομολογῆσαι τὴν ἀτοπίαν τῆς [190] δυνάμεως πῶς τὰ ἄδικα διαπράττεται, ἢ συγχωρῆσαι περὶ | θεῶν ἀδύνα- 1 τόν τι ψεῦδος, περὶ οὗ πάντες Ἑλληνές τε καὶ βάρβαροι τᾶναντία ἀληθῶς διαδοξάζουσιν.

7 Ἐχει μὲν οὖν τό γε ἀληθές οὕτως· οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ δεῖ προσθεῖναι

[188].8 ἐναπεργάζεται scr. Gale: ἐναπεργάζονται M ἀπεργάζονται V || 8-9 ἀναγκαῖον M et (on s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: ἀναγκαῖα V || 10 ὑπεραίρῃ] ὑπεραίρει M et (ἡνίκα ἂν cancell.) V<sup>c</sup> ἡνίκα ἂν ὑπεραίρει V | τὴν V: τοὺς M | τοῖς V: τῆς M || 12 ἑτέρως V et (σ s. v.) M<sup>c</sup>: ἑτέρων M | παρὰ M: περὶ V || [189].5 δρᾶσθαι V: δρᾶσαι M | πραγματεαῖς V: πραγματείας M || 9 πλημμελῶς M: πλημμελῶν V || 11 γίγνονται<sup>1</sup> V: γίγνεται M || 12 ἀτοπίαν] ἀτονίαν cj. Gale

of souls?<sup>261</sup> For if the community of a common nature between souls in bodies and without bodies produces the same degree of involvement with the life of the cosmos and a common rank, it follows necessarily that the same exaction of justice should be demanded from all of them, and especially when the magnitude of the injustices committed previously by a given soul exceeds the punishment, proportional to the crimes, which can be exacted from a single soul. If one wants to make any other distinctions, to indicate that the gods have a different perspective on justice than has been determined among us men, there might well turn out to be a useful approach to our problem from that quarter also, but for me the principles set out above are sufficient on their own to demonstrate the general and all-comprehensive type of healing which operates in these judgements.

6 However, in order to refute even more comprehensively the objection here raised, let us grant, if you wish, the very contrary of what we have established, that is to say that injustices are committed in the course of actions resulting from invocations. Yet even for these it is quite obvious that the gods should not be held responsible: for the good are causes only of goods, and are free of responsibility for any evil; now the gods, by their very essence, possess the good; therefore they commit no injustice.<sup>262</sup> We must, then, search for the causes responsible for such untoward events. If, however, we are not able to discover them, we must not abandon the true concept of the gods, nor, because of doubts that are raised as to whether and how evil actions occur, dissociate ourselves from the truly clear conception of the gods; for it is far better to admit that we are ignorant, by reason of the inadequacy of our intellectual faculties, of how these unjust actions come about, than to subscribe to an impossible falsehood about the gods, about which all Greeks and barbarians have come to an opposite and true conclusion.

7 This, then, is the truth of the situation. Nevertheless, one must go on to add the number and nature of the causes which

<sup>261</sup> The significance of *συνγένεια* here is not clear. Does "Abamon" mean the relationships of souls to each other, or of a given soul to its various instantiations?

<sup>262</sup> This syllogism is based on the theological principle laid down in *Resp.* 2.379b, that God is by nature good, and cannot be responsible for any evil, this being something that Porphyry, as a Platonist, would not dare to dispute.



καὶ τὰ αἷτια τῆς ἐνίστε τῶν κακῶν γενέσεως, πόσα τέ ἐστι καὶ ὅποια· 5  
καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲ ἀπλοῦν αὐτῶν ὑπάρχει τὸ εἶδος· ποικίλον δέ τι ὃν ποικίλων  
κακῶν προηγείται τῆς γενέσεως. Εἰ γὰρ ἀληθῶς ἄρτι ἐλέγομεν περὶ τῶν  
εἰδώλων καὶ τῶν κακῶν δαιμόνων τῶν ὑποκρινομένων τὴν τῶν θεῶν καὶ  
τῶν ἀγαθῶν δαιμόνων παρουσίαν, πολλὸν δὴπον τι καταφαίνεται ἐντεῦθεν  
ἐπιρρέον τὸ κακοποιὸν φύλον, περὶ δὲ συμβαίνειν φιλεῖ ἢ τοιάδε ἐναντίωσις. 10  
Δίκαιον μὲν γὰρ ἀξιοῖ εἶναι τὸν θεραπεύοντα, διότι ὑποκρίνεται εἶναι οἶον  
τὸ θεῖον γένος· ὑπηρετεῖ δὲ πρὸς τὰ ἄδικα, διότι πέφυκεν εἶναι πονηρόν.  
Ἔστω δὴ οὖν ὁ αὐτὸς λόγος περὶ ψεύδους καὶ ἀληθοῦς καὶ ἀγαθοῦ καὶ  
κακοῦ. Καθάπερ δὴ οὖν ἐν ταῖς μαντείαις μόνως τὸ ἀληθεύειν τοῖς θεοῖς  
ἀπονεύμαντες, κατιδόντες τὸ ψεῦδος λεγόμενον ἐν αὐταῖς, εἰς ἕτερον γένος 15  
[191] αἰτίας τοῦτο | ἀνήγομεν, τὸ τῶν δαιμόνων, οὕτω καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν δικαίων καὶ 1  
ἀδίκων θεοῖς μὲν καὶ ἀγαθοῖς δαίμοσιν ἀποδιδόναι δεῖ μόνως τὸ καλὸν καὶ  
δίκαιον, τὰ δὲ ἄδικα καὶ αἰσχυρὰ ἀπεργάζονται οἱ φύσει πονηροὶ δαίμονες.  
Καὶ τὸ μὲν ὁμολογούμενον πάντῃ καὶ σύμφωνον πρὸς ἑαυτὸ καὶ ἀεὶ ἑαυτῷ  
ὡσαύτως ἔχον προσήκει τοῖς κρείττοσι, τὸ δ' ἐναντίον καὶ ἀσύμφωνον καὶ 5  
μηδέποτε τὸ αὐτὸ τῆς δαιμονίας διαστάσεώς ἐστιν ἰδιώτατον, περὶ ἣν εἰ  
γίγνεται τὰ μαχόμενα οὐδὲν ἐστι θαυμαστόν· ἀλλὰ τοῦναντίον ἴσως ἂν ἦν  
θαυμαστότερον, εἰ μὴ οὕτως εἶχεν.

8 Ἀπ' ἄλλης τοίνυν αἰτίας ὁρμώμενοι ὑποθέσεως τὰ σωματικὰ  
μέρη τοῦ παντός οὔτε ἀργὰ οὔτε δυνάμει ἄμοιρα εἶναι τιθέμεθα, ἀλλ' 10  
ὅσῳ τελειότητι καὶ κάλλει καὶ μεγέθει προέχει τῶν ἡμετέρων, τοσούτῳ  
καὶ δυνάμει αὐτοῖς παρεῖναι μείζονα ἀποφανόμεθα. Αὐτὰ μὲν οὖν καθ'  
ἑαυτὰ ἕτερα δύνανται καὶ ποιεῖ διαφερούσας τινὰς ἐνεργείας· δύνανται δὲ  
καὶ πρὸς ἄλληλα πολλὸν δὴπον πλείονα ἀπεργάζεσθαι. Καὶ δῆτα καὶ εἰς τὰ  
[192] μέρη καθήκει | τις ἀπὸ τῶν ὅλων ἢ μὲν συμπαθῆς καθ' ὁμοιότητα τῶν 1

[190].5 τὰ M et s. v. V<sup>2</sup>: om. V || 6 δέ τι ὃν scr. Westerink: δ' ἔτι ὃν V  
(sed p. n.) et M αἷτιον i. m. V<sup>2</sup> || 10 φύλον cj. i. m. B<sup>3</sup>: φύλλον VM | φιλεῖ  
M: φιλεῖ καὶ V || [191].1 ἀνήγομεν scripsi: ἀνηγμένον codd. || 14 καὶ<sup>3</sup> V:  
om. M || 15 καθήκει M: καθίκει V

from time to time give rise to evils; and indeed their form is not simple, and being complex it produces the generation of a complexity of evils. For if we were speaking truly just now<sup>263</sup> about phantoms and evil daemons, who assume the appearance of gods and of good daemons, a great profusion of maleficence will evidently flow from that, around which such contradictions will tend to arise. For an evil daemon requires that his worshipper be just, because he is pretending to resemble the divine race; but he engineers this for unjust ends, because he is by nature wicked. The same goes for falsehood and truth,<sup>264</sup> and for good and evil. In the same way, then, that in the case of oracles we attribute to the gods only true responses, and that, if we observe any falsehood being uttered in them, we refer it to another kind of cause, namely that of daemons, even so in the case of just and unjust acts, we should only attribute to gods and to good daemons what is noble and just, whereas unjust and base deeds are committed by daemons of evil nature. And that which is entirely consistent and harmonious with itself and always identical with itself<sup>265</sup> befits the superior beings, while what is contradictory and unharmonious and never in the same state is most proper to the daemoniac condition,<sup>266</sup> at which level it will not be surprising to find contradictions; indeed, on the contrary, it would perhaps be more surprising if this were not the case.

8 Starting again from another standpoint now, we declare that the bodily parts of the universe are neither inert nor deprived of power; on the contrary, by the degree that they exceed our own bodies in perfection and beauty and size, by so much do we maintain their possession of greater power. On their own, indeed, they possess each a distinct power and produce differing acts; when linked up to each other, however, they can naturally achieve far more. And thus from the whole there descends to the parts a multifiform activity, either working through sympathy by virtue of the

<sup>263</sup> That is, in III.31.

<sup>264</sup> Cf. II.10.

<sup>265</sup> "Abamon" here uses the basic Platonic formulation for the Forms to refer to the gods.

<sup>266</sup> We take this to be the meaning of *διάστασις* here, rather than "dissension," but that meaning would perhaps not be unsuitable either.

δυνάμεων ἢ δὲ κατ' ἐπιτηδεϊότητα τοῦ ποιοῦντος πρὸς τὸ πάσχον πολυει-  
 δῆς ποιήσις. Οὐκοῦν σωματικαῖς ἀνάγκαις συμβαίνει τινὰ περὶ τὰ μέρη  
 κακὰ καὶ ὀλέθρια, ὥς μὲν πρὸς τὰ ὅλα καὶ τὴν ἁρμονίαν τοῦ παντός ὄντα  
 σωτήρια καὶ ἀγαθὰ, τοῖς δὲ μέρεσιν ἀναγκαίαν τινὰ φθορὰν ἐπάγοντα, 5  
 ἢ τῷ μὴ δύνασθαι φέρειν τὰς τῶν ὅλων ἐνεργείας, ἢ ἄλλη τινὶ συμμίζει  
 καὶ κρᾶσει τῆς ἀφ' ἐαυτῶν ἀσθενείας, ἢ τὸ τρίτον ἀσυμμετρία τῶν μερῶν  
 πρὸς ἄλληλα.

9 Μετὰ δὲ τὸ σῶμα τοῦ παντός ἀπὸ τῆς φύσεως αὐτοῦ πολλὰ γί-  
 γνεται· καὶ γὰρ ἡ συμφωνία τῶν ὁμοίων καὶ ἡ ἐναντίωσις τῶν ἀνομοίων 10  
 ἀπεργάζεται οὐκ ὀλίγα. Ἔτι δὲ ἡ τῶν πολλῶν σύνοδος εἰς ἓν τὸ τοῦ παν-  
 τὸς ζῶον καὶ αἱ δυνάμεις δὲ αἱ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ὅσαι ποτέ εἰσι καὶ ὁποῖαι,  
 ἄλλο μὲν ὥς ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν ἐπὶ τῶν ὅλων, ἕτερον δ' ἐπὶ τῶν μερῶν ἐπιτε-  
 λοῦσι διὰ τὴν τῶν μερῶν διηρημένην ἀσθένειαν· οἷον ἡ φιλία τοῦ παντός  
 καὶ ὁ ἔρως καὶ τὸ νεῖκος, κατ' ἐνέργειαν μὲν ὄντα ἐν τῷ παντί, παθήματα 15  
 [193] | ἐν τοῖς μετέχουσιν τῶν καθ' ἕκαστα γίνονται· ἐν εἶδεσι δὲ προεστηκότα 1  
 καὶ λόγοις καθαροῖς ἐν τῇ τῶν ὅλων φύσει μεταλαμβάνει τινὸς ὕλικῆς ἐν-  
 δείας καὶ ἀμορφίας ἐπὶ τῶν κατὰ μέρος· συννηνωμένα δὲ πρὸς ἄλληλα ἐπὶ  
 τῶν ὅλων, ἐπὶ τῶν μερῶν διαστασιάζει. Καὶ οὕτως ἐπὶ πάντων ἐξίσταται  
 τῶν καλῶν καὶ τελείων καὶ ὅλων τὰ μεθ' ὕλης αὐτῶν μεταλαγχάνοντα 5  
 μεριστά. Ἐνια δὲ καὶ φθείρεται τῶν μερῶν ὑπὲρ τοῦ τὰ ὅλα τὰ κατὰ  
 φύσιν συνεστηκότα διασώζεσθαι· καὶ θλίβεται δὲ καὶ βαρεῖται ἐνίοτε τὰ

similarity of powers, or through the fitness of agent for patient.<sup>267</sup> So, then, it is in virtue of constraints consequent on corporeality that there come about evils and causes of destruction for individuals, such as are salutary and good for the whole and for the harmony of the universe, but result in an unavoidable degree of destructiveness for the parts, either because they are unable to bear the activities of the whole, or by reason of some combination and mixture of weakness arising from themselves, or thirdly, from some disproportion of the parts relative to each other.

9 Furthermore, in addition to the body of the world, many effects also follow from its nature;<sup>268</sup> for the concord of like entities and the opposition of unlike ones both produce not a few effects. And again, the combination of many entities into the one single living thing which is the universe, as well as the volume and multiplicity of powers which exist in the world, produce, speaking generally, one type of effect on the whole, and another on the parts, by reason of the fragmented weakness of the parts. For instance, friendship and love and strife, which operate as activities at the level of the universe,<sup>269</sup> become passions at the level of the individuals which participate in them; in the nature of the whole they take a leading role among the forms and pure reason-principles, whereas at the level of partial entities they contract a share of the indigence and deformity of matter; whereas they are united with each other in the whole, at the level of the parts they result in conflict. And so it is that, in all cases, those partial entities involved with matter, which participate in them, deviate from the beauty and perfection of the whole. It is even the case that certain partial entities must perish, in order to preserve the natural constitution of the whole; and sometimes it comes about that the parts are constricted and burdened, whereas those entities on the

<sup>267</sup> Here, we may note, the concept of ἐπιτηδεύτης is attached to the agent rather than the patient, which is unusual.

<sup>268</sup> Presumably φύσις, as contrasted with σῶμα, refers to the lower soul of the universe.

<sup>269</sup> A reference to the two cosmic principles of Empedocles (cf. frg. B17 D-K), φίλος and νεῖκος, which had long since been allegorised by later Platonists as the formal and material, or active and passive, principles of the universe, eliminating the cosmic cycle. “Abamon” can therefore take them as permanent, simultaneously operative principles in the universe.

μέρη, καίτοι τῶν ὡς ὅλων φρομένων ἀπ' αὐτῆς τῆς τοιαύτης ὀχλήσεως ἀπαθῶν διαμερόντων.

**10** Συλλογισώμεθα δὴ οὖν τὰ ἀπὸ τούτων συμβαίνοντα· εἰ γὰρ 10  
φυσικαῖς δυνάμεσιν ἢ σωματικαῖς τοῦ παντός χρῶνται τινες τῶν καλούν-  
των, ἡ μὲν δόσις γίγνεται τῆς ἐνεργείας ἀπροαίρετος καὶ ἄνευ κακίας· ὁ  
μέντοι χρώμενος αὐτῇ μεταστρέφει τὴν δόσιν ἐπὶ τὰναντία καὶ τὰ φαῦλα.  
Καὶ ἡ μὲν συμπαθῶς δι' ὁμοιότητα καὶ δι' ὁμοιότητα τοῖς πάθεσιν ὑπ-  
[194] ἐναντίως συγκινεῖται, ὁ δὲ ἤδη κατὰ προαίρεσιν ἔλκει παρὰ | τὸ δίκαιον 1  
ἐπὶ τὰ φαῦλα τὸ διδόμενον· καὶ ἡ μὲν κατὰ μίαν ἁρμονίαν τοῦ κόσμου  
τὰ πορρωτάτω ποιεῖ συνεργεῖν, εἰ δέ τις τοῦτο καταμαθὼν ἔλκειν ἐπιχει-  
ροῖ μὴ καλῶς μοίρας τινὰς τοῦ παντός εἰς ἕτερα μέρη, οὐ τὰ γε ἐκείνου  
αἵτια, ἀλλ' ἡ τῶν ἀνθρώπων τόλμα καὶ παράβασις τῆς ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τά- 5  
ξεως παρατρέπει τὰ καλὰ καὶ νόμιμα. Ὅποτε δὴ οὖν οὔτε οἱ θεοὶ δρῶσι  
τὰ δοξαζόμενα εἶναι πονηρά, ἀλλ' αἱ καθήκουσαι ἀπ' αὐτῶν φύσεις τε  
καὶ τὰ σώματα, οὔτε αὐτὰ ταῦτα οὕτως ὡς νομίζεται ἐνδίδωσι πλημμέ-  
λειάν τινα ἀφ' αὐτῶν, ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ δὲ τῶν ὅλων καταπέμπει τοῖς περὶ γῆν  
τάς οἰκείας ἀπορροίας, οἳ τε παραδεχόμενοι αὐτὰς συμμίζει τῇ οἰκείᾳ καὶ 10  
παρατροπῇ μεταπλάττουσιν, ἐτέρως τε διδομένας ἐπ' ἄλλα μετάγουσιν,

[193].8 ὡς ὅλων V: ὡς ὅλως M ὅλων ὡς cj. A ὅλως cj. B || 14-15  
ὑπεναντίως M: ὑπεναντίων V || [194].8 ὡς s. v. V<sup>2</sup>: om. VM

level of the whole remain unaffected by the very same source of trouble.<sup>270</sup>

10 Let us sum up, then, the consequences of this doctrine. If certain people, in their invocations, make use of physical or corporeal powers of the universe, the imparting of this activity comes about without premeditation, and so without evil intent; but the user may turn the gift to an opposite, evil end.<sup>271</sup> The gift is set in motion by means of sympathy, through the operation of likeness and <un>likeness<sup>272</sup> acting in conflict with the passions, but the user may, through the exercise of his will, draw the gift, contrary to justice, towards wickedness. The gift, in accordance with the single harmony of the cosmos, brings it about that the most distant elements in it co-operate with one another, but if someone, having fully grasped this, were wickedly to try to draw certain portions of the universe into contact with certain other parts, that is not the fault of the universe; it is rather the audacity<sup>273</sup> of men, and their transgression of the order prevailing in the cosmos, which distorts what is noble and lawful. So then, seeing as it is in any case not the gods that perform those acts which are deemed wicked, but rather the natures that descend from them, and bodies, and that even these do not, as is commonly supposed, emit anything sinful from themselves, but rather send down to creatures on earth their proper emanations for the salvation of the whole, while those that receive them produce alterations in them by reason of the deviation caused by their own particular blending

<sup>270</sup> It is not easy to guess what such a source of trouble might be, but one might conjecture such a phenomenon as a degree of wetness or drought such as would produce great hardship to individuals or particular regions, but which might be necessary for the balance of the cosmos as a whole.

<sup>271</sup> We may compare with this chapter the discussion of the power of magic by Plotinus, in *Enn.* 4.4.40-42, which "Abamon" seems to be reflecting.

<sup>272</sup> We are unable to make much sense of this as it stands, and find the repetition of δι' ὁμοιότητα peculiar, though Des Places manages a (rather forced) translation of it. It might be preferable to read καὶ ἀνομοιότητα, especially since that accords more closely with the beginning of *Enn.* 4.4.40: "but magic spells: how can their efficacy be explained? By the reigning sympathy and by the fact that in Nature there is an agreement of like forces and an opposition of unlike, and by the diversity of those multitudinous powers which converge in the one living universe" (trans. MacKenna).

<sup>273</sup> τολμα is a loaded word in Neoplatonic circles as a term for human wilfulness. Cf. Plotinus, *Enn.* 5.1.1,4.

κομιδῇ ἐξ ἀπάντων τούτων ἀνάτιον ἀποδέδεικται εἶναι τῶν κακῶν καὶ ἀδίκων τὸ θεῖον.

[195] | **11** Ἐρωτᾷς δὴ καὶ ἅμα ἀπορεῖς μετὰ τοῦτο, ὥς μὴ καθαρῶ 1  
μὲν ὄντι ἐξ ἀφροδισίων οὐκ ἂν καλοῦντι ὑπακούσαιεν, αὐτοὶ δὲ ἄγειν εἰς  
παράνομα ἀφροδίσια τοὺς τυχόντας οὐκ ὀκνοῦσιν. Τὸ δὲ ἔχει μὲν καὶ ἀπὸ  
τῶν ἔμπροσθεν εἰρημένων σαφῇ τὴν λύσιν· εἰ τῶν μὲν νόμων ἐκτός, κατ'  
ἄλλην δὲ κρείττονα τῶν νόμων αἰτίαν καὶ τάξιν ταῦτα γίγνεται, ἢ εἰ καθ' 5  
ἁρμονίαν μὲν καὶ φιλίαν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, κατὰ δέ τινα ἀσυμπαθῇ κρᾶσιν ἐπὶ  
τῶν μερῶν τὰ τοιαῦτα συμβαίνει, ἢ εἰ καλῶς διδομένων μεταστρέφεται ἢ  
δόσις τῶν καλῶν ὑπὸ τῶν λαμβανόντων ἐπὶ τὰναντία.

**12** Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ δεῖ καὶ κατ' ἰδίαν ἐπισκέψασθαι περὶ αὐτῶν τού-  
των, ὅπως τε γίνονται καὶ ὄντινα ἔχει λόγον. Δεῖ δὴ νοεῖν ὥς ἐν ζῳόν 10  
ἐστὶ τὸ πᾶν. Τὰ δ' ἐν αὐτῷ μέρη διέστηκε μὲν τοῖς τόποις, τῇ δὲ μιᾷ  
φύσει σπεύδει πρὸς ἄλληλα. Τὸ δὲ συναγωγὸν ὅλον καὶ τὸ τῆς συγκρά-  
[196] σεως αἴτιον ἔλκει μὲν καὶ αὐτοφυῶς τὰ μέρη πρὸς τὴν ἀλλήλων σύμμιξιν. 1  
Δύναται δὲ καὶ ἀπὸ τέχνης ἐγείρεσθαι τε καὶ ἐπιτείνεσθαι μᾶλλον τοῦ  
δέοντος· αὐτὸ μὲν οὖν καθ' ἑαυτὸ καὶ τὸ διατεῖνον ἀπ' αὐτοῦ περὶ ὅλον  
τὸν κόσμον ἀγαθόν τέ ἐστὶ καὶ πληρώσεως αἴτιον, κοινωνίας τε καὶ συν-  
όδου καὶ συμμετρίας συναρμοστικόν, ἔρωτός τε ἀδιάλυτον ἀρχὴν ἐντίθησι 5  
τῇ ἐνώσει, διακρατοῦσαν τὰ τε ὄντα καὶ τὰ γινόμενα. Ἐν δὲ τοῖς μέρεσι  
διὰ τὴν ἀπ' ἀλλήλων καὶ τῶν ὅλων ἀπόστασιν, καὶ διότι κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν  
αὐτῶν φύσιν ἀτελεῖ τέ ἐστὶ καὶ ἐνδεῇ καὶ ἀσθενῇ, μετὰ πάθους ποιεῖται

[194].12 κομιδῇ VM: καὶ κομιδῇ cj. B || [195].6 ἀσυμπαθῇ V: συμπαθῇ  
M || 11 μέρη M et (η ex ει) V<sup>2</sup>: μέρει V

of elements, which divert them from the purposes for which they were bestowed, it has been clearly demonstrated that the divine is free from blame for evils and injustices.

**11** You pose next a question that raises a problem, to wit, “how it can be that the gods will not hearken to a petitioner who is impure by reason of sexual intercourse, but nonetheless they themselves do not shrink from leading those who are involved with them into unlawful sexual liaisons.”<sup>274</sup> The answer to this should be obvious from what has just been said. Either these things happen outside the laws, but in accordance with a cause and order of things superior to the laws; or such things come about in accordance with the harmony and friendship<sup>275</sup> obtaining in the cosmos, but (are distorted) by reason of an unsympathetic mixture in its parts; or, while the gift is correctly bestowed, it is perverted to a contrary effect by the receivers of it.

**12** One should, nevertheless, give a more particular examination to these very questions, how they come about and what may be their rationale. First of all, we must bear in mind that the universe is a single living being.<sup>276</sup> The parts within it are spatially distinct, but strive towards each other by virtue of their single nature. The force of cohesion in the universe and the cause of their blending draws the parts naturally towards mingling with one another. This force, however, can be artificially aroused and intensified more than is proper. In and of itself this force, and that tension extending throughout the cosmos which derives from it,<sup>277</sup> is good and a cause of fulfilment, co-ordinates community and union and symmetry, and by its unity introduces an indissoluble principle of love, dominating all things both that exist (eternally) and that come into being. At the level of the individual parts, however, by reason of their distinction from each other and the whole, and because according to their proper natures they are

<sup>274</sup> This refers to the great variety of love-charms, such as one finds many examples of in the magical papyri; τοὺς τυχόντας here may refer rather to the victims of these charms than to those who employ them.

<sup>275</sup> Another probable reference to Empedoclean φιλία.

<sup>276</sup> The doctrine of Plato's *Timaeus* 30a-e.

<sup>277</sup> As Des Places remarks ad loc., this conception owes much to the Stoic concept of τόνος.



τὴν ἀλληλουχίαν· ἄφ' οὗ δὴ καὶ ἐπιθυμία καὶ ἔφεσις σύμφυτος αὐτῶν τοῖς πλείστοις ἔνεστιν.

10

Κατιδοῦσα δὴ οὖν αὐτὸ οὕτως ἐνσπειρόμενον τῇ φύσει καὶ περὶ αὐ-  
τὴν μεριζόμενον τέχνη, πολυειδῶς καὶ αὐτὴ μεριζομένη περὶ τὴν φύσιν  
ἔλκει ποικίλως αὐτὸ καὶ μετοχετεύει, καὶ τὸ μὲν ἑαυτῷ τεταγμένον εἰς  
ἀταξίαν μετὰγει, τὸ δὲ κάλλος καὶ τὸ τῶν εἰδῶν σύμμετρον ἀσυμμετρίας  
[197] καὶ ἀσχημοσύνης ἐμπίμπλησι, τὸ δ' ἕνεκα τῆς | ἐνώσεως συμφυρόμενον 1  
σεμνὸν τέλος ἐπ' ἄλλο ἀπρεπὲς μεταφέρει πλήρωμα τὸ κοινόν, κατὰ πά-  
θος ἐκ διαφορομένων πως συμφερόμενον· ὕλην τε ἐνδίδωσιν ἄφ' ἑαυτῆς,  
ἣτις ἀπρόσφορός ἐστιν εἰς τὴν τοῦ καλοῦ γένεσιν, ἢ μὴ δεχομένη παρὰ  
πᾶν τὸ καλὸν ἢ ἐπ' ἄλλα αὐτὸ μεταβάλλονσα, δυνάμεις τε πολλὰς φυσικὰς 5  
διαφερούσας μίγνυσιν, ἄφ' ὧν ὡς ἂν ἐθέλῃ οὕτω κατευθύνει τὰς πρὸς τὴν  
γένεσιν συμμίξεις· πανταχόθεν οὖν ἀποδείκνυμεν ὡς ἐκ τέχνης τινὸς ἀν-  
θρωπίνης ἢ τοιαύτη γίγνεται κατασκευὴ τῆς τῶν ἀφροδισίων συμπλοκῆς,  
ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀπὸ τινος δαιμονίας ἢ θείας ἀνάγκης.

**13** Ἐπίσκειται δὴ οὖν καὶ κατ' ἄλλο αἰτίων γένος πῶς λίθος ἢ 10  
βοτάνη πολλάκις φύσιν ἔχουσιν ἄφ' ἑαυτῶν φθαρτικὴν ἢ πάλιν συναγωγὸν  
τῶν γιγνομένων· μὴ γὰρ οὐκ ἦν ἐπὶ τούτων μόνων ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπὶ μειζό-  
νων καὶ ἐν μείζοσι πράγμασι φύσεων ἢ φυσικῇ αὐτῇ ἐπικράτεια, ἣν οἱ μὴ  
[198] δυνάμενοι συλλογίζεσθαι τάχ' ἂν ἐπὶ τὰ κρείττονα | ἔργα τὰ τῶν φύσεων 1  
ἐνεργήματα μεταφέροιεν. Ἦδη τοίνυν συνωμολόγηται, ἐν τῇ γενέσει καὶ  
περὶ τὰ ἀνθρώπεια πράγματα καὶ ὅσα ἐστὶν ἐν τοῖς περὶ γῆν τὸ τῶν πο-  
νηρῶν δαιμόνων φῶλον πλεον ἐπικρατεῖν δύνασθαι. Τί οὖν ἔτι θαυμαστὸν  
εἰ καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἔργα τὸ τοιοῦτον ἐπιτελεῖ; οὐδὲ γὰρ πᾶς ἀνὴρ διακρίναι 5  
δυνηθεῖν τί ποτ' ἐστὶ τὸ σπουδαῖον αὐτοῦ καὶ φαῦλον ἢ τίσι γνωρίσμασι

[196].13 ἑαυτῷ VM: ἐν ἑαυτῷ cj. Gale || 15 ἕνεκα τῆς VM: ἐν ἐκάστοις  
cj. Gale || [197].4 ἀπρόσφορός cj. Gale: πρόσφορός codd. || 11 συναγωγὸν  
V: συναγαγὸν (α s. v.) V<sup>r</sup> συναγωγὴν MU συναγωγικὴν cj. Boulliau i. m. U

incomplete and non-self-sufficient and weak, their mutual contact<sup>278</sup> is brought about with the accompaniment of passion; for which reason it comes about that desire and an innate mutual attraction are present in the great majority of them.

Seeing, then, this force thus implanted in nature and distributed throughout it, art,<sup>279</sup> which is itself divided in many forms throughout nature, draws it in various ways and channels it; it brings to disorder that which was ordered of itself, fills the beauty and the symmetry of the forms with asymmetry and ugliness, and transfers the noble end associated with unity to another unseemly sort of fulfilment, a vulgar one, a union of disparate elements brought together somehow under the guidance of passion. It provides from its own resources material that is unsuitable to the production of beauty, either being absolutely unreceptive of beauty, or such as to transform it into something else, and mixes in with it many disparate natural powers, by means of which it organises as it wishes unions for the purposes of generation. So then, on all counts, we can show that it is from some human art that such contrivance of sexual union derives, and not from any compulsion originating from daemons or gods.

**13** Consider now, taking another type of causal process: how a stone, say, or a plant may often possess of itself a nature such as either to destroy or, conversely, to put together generated things; might perhaps this sort of natural power after all be present not only in such things as these, but also in superior natures, at higher levels of being, and lead those who are not able to reason clearly to attribute the activities of natural forces to the actions of higher powers? It has previously been agreed, after all, that it is in the realm of generation and in respect of human affairs and such as concern the earthly realm that the tribe of evil daemons has most power. How would it be surprising, then, if such a class of beings performed such deeds as these? Indeed, it is not every man who could discern the good from the evil (among daemons), and by what characteristic signs one may distinguish either of them; but it is precisely by not being able to distinguish

<sup>278</sup> The term ἀλληλουχία is found both in Iamblichus, *Protr.* 21 and in the *Theologumena Arithmeticae* 3.8 De Falco, and the verb ἀλληλουχεῖν in *Comm. Nic.* 7.13, so it seems a favoured Iamblichean term.

<sup>279</sup> That is to say, the art of vulgar magic, rather than theurgy. Indeed, the following passage contains a strong attack on the practices of vulgar magic.

διακρίνεται ἐκάτερον· ὃ δὴ μὴ οἷοί τε ὄντες καθορᾶν ἀτόπως συλλογίζον-  
 ται περὶ τούτων τὴν τῆς αἰτίας ζήτησιν, καὶ ἐπανάγουσιν αὐτὴν ἐπὶ τὰ  
 κρείττονα γένη τῆς φύσεώς τε καὶ τῆς δαιμονίας τάξεως· εἰ δὲ καὶ τῆς  
 ψυχῆς τῆς μερικῆς ἐπὶ τούτων συνεπιλαμβάνονται τινες δυνάμεις εἰς ἀπ- 10  
 εργασίαν, τῆς τε ἐν σώματι κατεχομένης καὶ ὅση τὸ μὲν ὀστρεῶδες καὶ  
 γήινον σῶμα ἀφῆκεν, ἐπὶ δὲ πνεύματος θολεροῦ καὶ διύγρου περιπλανᾶ-  
 ται κάτω περὶ τοὺς τῆς γενέσεως τόπους, καὶ αὐτὴ ἀληθὴς μὲν ἂν εἴη  
 [199] ἡ δόξα, πορρωτάτω δὲ τῆς τῶν κρειττόνων αἰτίας διέστηκεν. Οὐδαμῶς 1  
 ἄρα τὸ θεῖον καὶ ὅσον ἐστὶν ἀγαθὸν δαιμόνιον ὑπηρετεῖ ταῖς παρανόμοις  
 εἰς τὰ ἀφροδίσια τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐπιθυμίαις, ἐπειδὴ πέφηνεν αὐτῶν ἄλλα  
 αἷτια πολλὰ ὑπάρχοντα.

[198].7 οἷοί (alt. ι e v) M<sup>2</sup>: οἷόν VM || 13 αὐτῇ VM: αὐτῇ malit Parthey  
 || 14 ἡ V: om. M || [199].3 πέφηνεν VM: πέφυκεν cj. B

clearly between these that they come to improper conclusions in their search for the cause of these phenomena, and refer them to the classes of being superior to nature and to the rank of daemons. And if, in addition, certain powers of the individual soul are adduced in these cases as contributing to the achievement of a given result—a soul, that is, which is held in a body after the manner of one which has left behind the shell-like and earthy body, but which still wanders about in the realms of generation mounted upon a murky and damp pneumatic vehicle<sup>280</sup>—this view also would be true, but very far removed from imputing blame to the superior classes of being. In no way, then, is the divinity and the good variety of daemon at the service of the unlawful desires of men for sexual indulgence, since it has been shown that there are many other entities responsible for this.

<sup>280</sup> This seems the best rendering of *πνεῦμα* here. This whole passage exemplifies Iamblichus's doctrine of the pneumatic vehicle of the soul, on which see Finamore (1985). For other relevant passages, cf. above II.4; II.7; III.11. For the term *ὁστρεώδης*, cf. Iamblichus, *De an.* §26 Finamore-Dillon (ap. Stobaeus 1:378 Wachsmuth). The notion of restless souls trapped in polluted "vehicles" in the sublunary world and capable of doing mischief receives its Platonic warrant from such a passage as *Phaed.* 81b–d.

## V

**1** Ὁ τοίνυν πάντων, ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν, ἀνθρώπων τῶν τε ἐν παι- 5  
δείᾳ διατριβόντων καὶ τῶν ἀπειροτέρων τῆς ἐν λόγοις μελέτης κοινόν  
ἐστι ζήτημα, ἀπορεῖς κατὰ τὸ συνεχές, τὸ περὶ θυσιῶν λέγω, τίνα ἔχουσι  
χρεῖαν ἢ δύναμιν ἐν τῷ παντὶ καὶ παρὰ τοῖς θεοῖς, τίνος τε ἔνεκα λόγου  
προσφόρως μὲν τοῖς τιμωμένοις ὠφελίμως δὲ τοῖς τὰ δῶρα προσάγου-  
σιν ἐπιτελοῦνται. Πρόσεστι δὲ δὴ αὐτόθι καὶ ἄλλη τις ἐναντίωσις ἢ ἀπὸ 10  
τοῦ τοὺς ὑποφήτας ἀπέχεσθαι δεῖν ἐμψύχων, ἵνα μὴ οἱ θεοὶ τοῖς ἀπὸ ζώ-  
ων ἀτμοῖς χραίνωνται· ἐναντίον γὰρ δὴ τοῦτο τῷ αὐτοῦς τοῖς ἀπὸ ζώων  
ἀτμοῖς μάλιστα δελεάζεσθαι.

[200] | **2** Τὴν μὲν οὖν μάχην τῶν νυνὶ προκειμένων εὐπόρως ἂν τις 1  
διαλύσειε, τὴν τῶν ὅλων πρὸς τὰ μέρη παραδείξας ὑπεροχὴν, καὶ τὴν τῶν  
θεῶν πρὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἐξηρημένην ὑπερβολὴν ὑπομνήσας· οἷον ὁ λέ-  
γω τῇ μὲν ὅλῃ ψυχῇ προεστηκέναι τοῦ κοσμικοῦ παντὸς σώματος, καὶ  
τοῖς οὐρανίοις θεοῖς ἐπιβεβηκέναι τοῦ οὐρανίου σώματος οὔτε βλαβερόν 5  
ἐστὶν εἰς παθῶν παραδοχὴν οὔτε ἐμπόδιον πρὸς τὰς νοήσεις, τῇ δὲ ἐν μέ-  
ρει ψυχῇ κοινωνεῖν σώματι πρὸς ἀμφοτέρωτα ταῦτά ἐστιν ἀλυσιτελές. Εἰ  
δὴ τις κατιδὼν τοῦτο συμπλέκει τινὰ τοιαύτην ἀπορίαν, ὡς εἰ τῇ ψυχῇ  
τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ δεσμός τὸ σῶμα, καὶ τῇ τοῦ παντὸς ἔσται δεσμός, καὶ εἴ-  
περ ἢ μεριστὴ ψυχὴ πρὸς τὸ σῶμα ἐπέστραπται, καὶ ἡ δύναμις τῶν θεῶν 10  
ὡσαύτως ἐπέστραπται πρὸς τὴν γένεσιν, πᾶς ἂν ἀπαντήσῃε πρὸς τοῦτο,  
λέγων ὡς οὐκ οἶδεν ὅση τίς ἐστὶν ἢ τῶν κρειττόνων πρὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώ-

## BOOK V

1 The question you raise next is one that is a common concern for virtually all men, both those who have given time to education and those relatively lacking in experience of philosophic reasoning; I mean the question of sacrifices—what is the utility of them, or what power they have in respect of the universe or the gods, and on what principle they achieve their purpose, both suitably to those honoured, and usefully for those presenting the gifts. Furthermore, there straightway arises a contradiction as well, stemming from the fact that the priests should abstain from animal food, in order that the gods should not be polluted by the vapours arising from animals, since this contradicts the opinion that they are primarily attracted by odours from living things.<sup>281</sup>

2 However, the conflict between the propositions set out here may be resolved easily by demonstrating the dominance of the universal over the particular, and recalling to our minds the transcendent superiority of gods to men. To take an example of what I mean: for the universal soul to preside over the whole body of the cosmos, or for the heavenly gods to govern the body of the heavens, is neither harmful to them from the point of view of being contaminated by passions, nor is it an obstacle to their intellectual activity, but for the individual soul to consort with the body is detrimental from both these points of view. If, then, someone, observing this, strings together some such problem as the following: “if body is a shackle for our soul, then it will also be a shackle for the soul of the universe, and if, as is the case, the individual soul is directed towards the body, so likewise is the power of the gods directed towards the realm of generation”—anyone might respond to this by saying that such a person does not comprehend the nature of the superiority of the higher beings to men,

<sup>281</sup> Porphyry's question here is attested by Augustine in his summary of the *Epistle to Anebo* (*Civ.* 10.11): “Why do they insist that their priests should abstain from eating meat, no doubt to guard themselves from the danger of pollution by their bodily exhalations, while they themselves are attracted by smells, and especially by the stench of sacrificial victims?”

πους καὶ ἡ τῶν ὄλων ὑπεροχὴ πρὸς τὰ μέρη. Ἐπ' ἄλλων οὖν καὶ ἄλλων  
τὰ ἀντικείμενα προσαγόμενα οὐδεμίαν κινεῖ πρὸς ἀμφισβήτησιν.

[201] | **3** Καὶ ἐνταῦθα δὴ οὖν ὁ αὐτὸς ἐξαρκεῖ λόγος· ἡμῶν μὲν γὰρ 1  
βαρύτερη καὶ μιασμὸν ἐναπομόρηνται τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς κοινωνησάντων  
ποτὲ σωμάτων ἢ ἀπόλαυσις, ἡδυπάθειάν τε ἐντίκτει καὶ ἄλλα ἐμποιεῖ  
τῇ ψυχῇ πολλὰ νοσήματα· ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν θεῶν καὶ τῶν ἐγκοσμίων καὶ ὄλων  
αἰτίων ἢ ἀπὸ τούτων ἀναγομένη πῶς ἱεροπρεπῶς ἀναθυμίασις (ἅτε δὴ 5  
περιεχομένη καὶ οὐ περιέχουσα, συνταπτομένη τε αὕτη πρὸς τὸ πᾶν ἄλλ'  
οὐχὶ συντάπτουσα πρὸς ἑαυτήν τὰ ὅλα καὶ τὰ τῶν θεῶν), συναρμόζεται  
αὕτη τοῖς κρεῖττοσι καὶ ὅλοις αἰτίοις ἄλλ' οὐχὶ κατέχει αὐτὰ καὶ συναρ-  
μόζει πρὸς ἑαυτήν.

**4** Οὐδὲ γὰρ ὅπερ σε εἴσεισιν ὥς μαχόμενον περὶ τῆς τῶν ἐμφύ- 10  
χων ἀποχῆς ἔχει τινὰ δυσκολίαν, εἴ τις αὐτὸ ὀρθῶς ὑπολαμβάνει· οὐ γὰρ  
δὴ ἵνα μὴ οἱ θεοὶ τοῖς ἀπὸ ζώων ἀτμοῖς χραίνωνται, διὰ τοῦτο οἱ θεοα-  
πεύοντες αὐτοὺς ἀπέχονται τῶν ἐμφύχων. Τίς γὰρ ἂν καὶ ἀπὸ σωμάτων  
[202] ἀναθυμίασις αὐτοῖς πελάσειεν, οἳ καὶ πρὶν ἐφάψασθαι τι τῶν ἐνύλων τῆς 1  
σφετέρας δυνάμεως τὴν ὕλην ἀναφῶς ἀποκόπτουσιν· καὶ μὴ ὅτι ἡ δύναμις  
αὐτῶν ἀναιρεῖ πάντα καὶ ἀφανίζει τὰ σώματα ἄνευ τοῦ πρὸς αὐτὰ πελά-  
ζειν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ σῶμα τὸ οὐράνιον ἄμικτόν ἐστι πρὸς πάντα τὰ ὑλικά  
στοιχεῖα, καὶ οὔτε ἂν αὐτὸ παραδέξαιτό τι εἰς ἑαυτὸ τῶν ἔξωθεν, οὔτε ἂν 5

[200].14 πρὸς VM: πῶς cj. Gale || [201].6 συνταπτομένη (π p. n., τ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: συνταπτομένη M συνταπτομένη V || 7 συντάττουσα VM: συνάπτουσα cj. Gale || 8 καὶ<sup>1</sup> M: καὶ τοῖς V || 10 εἴσεισιν VM: ἔσεισεν cj. Boulliau i. m. U ἐξίστησιν cj. Gale

and that of wholes to parts.<sup>282</sup> The fact is, then, that when opposite predicates relate to different types of subject, no basis for dispute arises.

**3** Here, then, also the same argument will suffice: in our case, the enjoyment of bodies which were once united to a soul impresses lassitude and pollution, engenders voluptuousness and produces many other diseases in the soul; in the case of the gods, on the other hand, and the cosmic and universal causal principles, the exhalation which ascends from these in accordance with correctly performed rites (inasmuch as it is circumscribed by them rather than circumscribing them, and is itself aligned to the universe, and not aligning to itself the universe and the gods),<sup>283</sup> it adapts itself to the higher powers and universal causes, but does not take possession of them and assimilate them to itself.

**4** Nor should that problem which occurs to you as a source of conflict, that is, the question of abstention from animal food, occasion any difficulty, if you consider it correctly. For it is not in order that the gods may not be polluted by vapours arising from animal substances that those ministering to them abstain from living things. For after all, what exhalation from bodies could come near to them, who, before anything material could touch their power, neutralise matter without making any contact with it? Never mind the fact that their power removes and annihilates all bodies without coming into proximity to them—even the body of the heavens is unmixed with any of the material elements,<sup>284</sup> and it would not receive into itself anything external, nor yet would it

<sup>282</sup> “Abamon” makes more extensive use of this notion that wholes are superior to parts at I.18.56 and IV.8–9, where he uses it as an explanation for the occurrence of evil and suffering in the universe. For the importance of the whole/part dichotomy in Iamblichus’s system see Shaw (1995, 54–55, 63–66), who suggests that he is partly motivated by the need to reject Plotinus’s belief in the undescended soul. For the origin of the debate see Plato, *Theaet.* 201e–206b and Aristotle, *Met.* 1024a12–28.

<sup>283</sup> The phraseology here recalls Iamblichus’s characterisation of transcendent Time at *Comm. Tim.* frg. 63 Dillon.

<sup>284</sup> Notable here is the strong contrast made between the “celestial body”—presumably the corporeal aspect of the heavenly bodies taken as a whole—and the sublunary material elements, even to the point of describing it, just below, as an *ἄυλον σῶμα*, an “immaterial body.” This doctrine probably owes something to Stoicism (if we may judge from such evidence as Zeno’s definition of a heavenly body at *SVF* 1.120 (from Stobaeus), as “intellectual and



ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ τινα δοίη μοῖραν εἰς τὰ ἀλλότρια. Πότε οὖν ἀτμός τις περιγίγνεται, ὃς οὐδὲ ἄχρι σταδίων πέντε ἀπὸ γῆς ἐπαιρούμενος ἀπορρεῖ πάλιν εἰς τὴν γῆν, δύναται τῷ οὐρανῷ πελάζειν ἢ τρέφειν τὸ κυκλοφορητικὸν καὶ ἄνθρον σῶμα ἢ ποιεῖν τι ἐν αὐτῷ ὅλως ἢ μίasma ἢ ἄλλο ὅτιον πάθος;

Ὁμολογεῖται γὰρ δὴ τὸ αἰθέριον σῶμα πάσης ἐκτὸς εἶναι ἐναντιώ- 10  
σεως, τροπῆς τε πάσης ἀπηλλάχθαι, καὶ τὸ δύνασθαι εἰς ὅτιον μεταβάλλειν πάντη καθαρεύειν, ῥοπῆς τε τῆς ἐπὶ τὸ μέσον καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ μέσον  
[203] παντελῶς ἀπολελύσθαι, διότι ἀρρεπές ἐστιν ἢ κατὰ κύκλον περιφύρεται· 1  
οὐκ οὐδὲ ἀπὸ τῶν σωμάτων τῶν ἐκ διαφορουσῶν δυνάμεων καὶ κινήσεων  
συνεστηκότων, τρεπομένων παντοίως ἢ ἄνω ἢ κάτω φερομένων, οὐκ  
ἔστιν ἥτις ἂν κοινωνία φύσεως ἢ δυνάμεως ἢ ἀναθυμιάσεως συμμιχθεῖη  
πρὸς τὰ ἐν οὐρανῷ σώματα, οὐδὲ ποιήσει τι οὖν εἰς αὐτά, ἃ γε παντελῶς 5  
ἀπ' αὐτῶν κεχώρισται. Οὐ γὰρ ἐκεῖνα δυνάμιν τινα ἔχει τοῦ παραδέχεσθαι  
εἰς ἑαυτὰ τὴν ἀπὸ τῶν γιγνομένων μεταβολήν, ὄντα ἀγέννητα. Ἡ  
που ἄρα τὰ τῶν θεῶν χραίνεται ἀπὸ τῶν τοιούτων ἀτμῶν, ἃ καὶ τῆς ὕλης  
ὅλης καὶ τῶν ἐνύλων σωμάτων τοὺς ἀτμούς, ἴν' οὕτως εἴπωμεν, ἐξαίφνης  
κατὰ μίαν βολὴν ἀποκόπτει; 10

Τοῦτο μὲν οὖν οὐκ ἄξιον ὑπονοεῖν· πολὺ δὲ μᾶλλον ἐκεῖνο χρὴ δια-  
νοεῖσθαι, ὥς ἡμῖν καὶ τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ φύσει τὰ τοιαῦτά ἐστιν ἀλλότρια· τὰ  
μὲν γὰρ δὴ διηρημένα εἰς τὰ μεριστὰ καὶ τὰ ἔνυλα πρὸς τὰ ἔνυλα καὶ ὅλως

[202].6 τινα M: τινος V || 7 ἀπορρεῖ M: καταρρεῖ V || 11 τὸ ] an  
τοῦ? || [203].2 σωμάτων τῶν M: σωμάτων τῆς τῶν V || 12 τὰ² scripsi:  
ταῦτα codd.

accord to alien bodies any share of its essence. How then could a terrestrial vapour, which rises hardly five stades<sup>285</sup> into the air before falling back to earth, approach the heavens or convey nourishment to its cyclic and immaterial body, or in general produce in it any effect whatsoever, whether pollution or anything else?

For it is agreed that the aetherial body is exempt from all contrariety,<sup>286</sup> and is free from all variation, completely purified from<sup>287</sup> any capacity for changing into anything else, and utterly liberated from any tendency towards the centre or away from the centre,<sup>288</sup> because it is free of tendency, or rather is borne round in a circle. So then, it is not possible that from bodies composed of differing potencies and motions, subject to all sorts of change, and borne upwards and downwards, there should arise any communion of nature or potency or exhalation which could mingle with the bodies in the heavens, nor therefore exert any influence on them, seeing as they are completely separated from them. For those latter do not have any faculty for receiving into themselves any alteration stemming from the realm of generation, since they are ungenerated. Is it likely, then, that the substance of the gods should suffer any pollution from such vapours, seeing as it instantaneously and at one blow, so to speak, cuts off the vapours emanating from matter as a whole and from material bodies?

This, then, it is not proper to contemplate. What one should far rather assume to be the case is that such a level of being is quite alien to us and to our nature. Those things which are divided into

intelligent, fiery of the type of creative fire." It is certainly a distinction recognised by Philo of Alexandria (*Opif.* 73; *Gig.* 8; *Plant.* 12).

<sup>285</sup> A stade (στάδιον), originally the distance that could be covered by a single draught of a plough, and later the length of a running track, was around two hundred metres.

<sup>286</sup> Cf. Iamblichus's discussion of the relevance of Aristotle's definition of substance in the *Categories* 410 as "that which, being numerically one and the same, is able to receive contraries" to the substance of the heavenly bodies, ap. Simplicius, *Comm. Cat.* 116.25 ff. = frg. 33 Dalsgaard Larsen. There, however, his point is (since he is defending Aristotle's definition) that at the heavenly level the contraries are present, but simultaneously, in contrast to what is true of sublunary substance. This, however, frees the heavenly bodies from ἐναντιώσεις in the sense used here.

<sup>287</sup> Reading τοῦ for τό of the MSS, as Des Places suggests.

<sup>288</sup> A reference to the various motions proper to sublunary elements, from all of which the aether is free, enjoying, as it does, unremitting circular motion.

τὰ ὁμοφυῇ πρὸς τὰ ὁμοφυῇ δύνатаί τινα κοινωνίαν ἔχειν πρὸς ἄλληλα  
 [204] τοῦ ποιεῖν ἢ πάσχειν, τὰ δ' ἐπ' ἄλλης | ὄντα οὐσίας καὶ ὅσα παντελῶς 1  
 ὑπεραίρει φύσεσί τε καὶ δυνάμεσιν ἑτέραις χρῆται, ταῦτα οὐχ οἶά τέ ἐστιν  
 ἢ ποιεῖν εἰς ἄλληλα ἢ δέχεσθαι τινα παρ' ἀλλήλων. Καὶ ὁ μολυσμὸς οὖν  
 ἀπὸ τῶν ἐνύλων συμπίπτει τοῖς ἀπὸ σώματος ὑλικοῦ κατεχομένοις, καὶ τὸ  
 ἀπὸ τούτων ἀποκαθαίρεσθαι ἀναγκαῖον ἐκείνοις ὅσα δύνатаι ἀπὸ τῆς ὕλης 5  
 μιαινεσθαι· ἃ δ' οὔτε ὅλως ἔχει φύσιν διαιρετήν οὔτε δύναμιν κέκτῃται  
 τοῦ εἰσδέχεσθαι εἰς ἑαυτὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς ὕλης πάθη, τί ἂν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐνύλων  
 μιανθείη; πῶς δ' ἔνεστιν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐμῶν παθημάτων ἢ ἄλλου του τῶν  
 ἀνθρώπων ἐπιθολοῦσθαι τὸ θεῖον, ὃ μηδὲν ἔχει κοινὸν πρὸς ἡμᾶς, τῆς  
 ἀνθρωπίνης ἀσθενείας κρεῖττον προϋπάρχον; 10

Οὐδέτερον ἄρα διαφέρει τι τοῖς θεοῖς, οὔτε τὸ ἡμᾶς ἐμπίπλασθαι  
 ὑλικῶν σωμάτων (οὐδὲ γάρ ἐστιν ὅλως τι πρὸς αὐτοὺς τοῦτο, οὐδὲ χραί-  
 νονται αὐτοὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμετέρας κηλίδος, ἄχραντοι γάρ εἰσι πάντη καὶ  
 [205] ἀκήρατοι), οὔτε εἴ τινες ὑλικοὶ σωμάτων ἀτμοὶ περὶ γῆν ἀναδίδονται. | 1  
 Πορρωτάτω γὰρ αὐτῶν καὶ οὗτοι τῆς οὐσίας καὶ δυνάμεως ἀφεστήκασιν.

Ὅλη ἄρα καὶ τῆς ἐναντιώσεως συνανήρηται ἢ ὑπόθεσις, εἰ μηδέτε-  
 ρον αὐτῆς ὑπάρχει μῶριον περὶ τοὺς θεοὺς· ὃ γὰρ μηδὲ ὅλως ἐστί, πῶς  
 ἂν ἔχοι τινὰ ἐν ἑαυτῷ μάχην; μάτην ἄρα ὑποπτεύεις τὰ τοιαῦτα ὡς ἄτο- 5  
 πα καὶ ἀναξίας τῶν θεῶν προσάγεις ἀπορίας, ἃς οὐδ' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπων τῶν  
 ἀγαθῶν εὐλόγως ἂν τις προσοῖτο. Τὸ γὰρ δελεάζεσθαι ὑπὸ τῆς τῶν ἀτ-  
 μῶν ἀναθυμιάσεως οὐδὲ ἀνθρωπὸς τις νοῦν ἔχων καὶ ἀπαθῆς εἰσδέξαιτ'  
 ἂν ποτε εἰς ἑαυτόν, μὴ ὅτι γε τῶν κρειττόνων τις· ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν μικρὸν  
 ὕστερον τεύξεται λόγου, νυνὶ δέ, τῆς ἐναντιώσεως διὰ πολλῶν λύσεων 10  
 ἀνηρημένης, ἐνταῦθα καὶ περὶ τῆς πρώτης ἀπορίας τὸν λογισμὸν ἀπο-  
 παύομεν.

[204].3 παρ' ἀλλήλων M: παραλλήλων V || 8 του M: τοῦ V || 13  
 αὐτοὶ M et i. m. V: om. i. t. V || [205].2 καί<sup>2</sup> ] om. VM || 5 ἔχοι cj. A: ἔχει  
 V ἔχη M || 8 εἰσδέξαιτο M: εἰσδέξεται τὸ V

particular and material entities can have something in common with other material entities—and in general things of like nature with each other—in respect of acting and being acted upon, but those which are of a different essence, and such as are of a thoroughly superior nature, and are in command of different natures and powers, such things as these cannot either act on each other or receive any influence from each other. And so pollution emanating from material things may communicate itself to entities which are confined in a material body, and to be purified from such influences is necessary for such things as can be polluted by matter; but as for entities which do not at all possess a divisible nature, or have acquired the power of receiving into themselves influences emanating from matter, how could they be polluted from material things? And how, then, could the divine be contaminated by influences emanating from me or from any other man, seeing as it has nothing in common with us, pre-existing, as it does, superior to all human weakness?

Neither the one thing nor the other, then, makes any difference to the gods, neither our filling ourselves with material bodies (that is of absolutely no concern to them, nor are they polluted by our impurity, for they are entirely immaculate and free of taint); nor yet the ascent of any material vapours of bodies from the earth. For such vapours remain very far removed from their essence and power.

The whole basis for your objection is removed, then, if neither element in it is of concern to the gods; for how would that which has no substance to it at all involve a conflict? So it is futile of you to suspect illogicality in such matters, and to dredge up difficulties that are unworthy of the gods, seeing that one would be quite justified in rejecting their relevance even to good men. For, to be ensnared by the attractions of exhalations from vapours is not something that any man who enjoyed good sense and control of his emotions would admit to himself, never mind one of the superior classes of being. But this question will come up for further discussion a little later;<sup>289</sup> for the moment, since numerous solutions have already been produced to dispose of this objection, I will bring to an end here the treatment of the first difficulty.

<sup>289</sup> See V.10.

5 Ὁ δὲ μείζον ἐρώτημα καὶ περὶ μειζόνων πυνθάνη, πῶς ἂν  
 σοι δυνηθείην δυσβάτου καὶ μακρᾶς δεόμενον διερμηνεύσεως ἀποκρίνα-  
 [206] σθαι διὰ βραχέων καὶ ἱκανῶς ; | «ἐρῶ μὲν οὖν ἐγώ, καὶ προθυμίας οὐδὲν 1  
 ἀπολείψω· πειρῶ δ' ἔπεσθαι» τοῖς συντόμως ὑποδεικνυμένοις καὶ μέχρως  
 ἐμφράσεως ἐνίοις προῖοῦσιν· ἐγὼ δέ σοι λέγω τό γε ἕμὸν δόγμα περὶ θυ-  
 σιῶν, ὥς οὐδέποτε αὐτὰς δεῖ προσίεσθαι τιμῆς μόνης ἔνεκα, καθάπερ δὴ  
 τιμῶμεν τοὺς εὐεργέτας, οὐδὲ ὁμολογίας ἔνεκα χαρίτων, ἐφ' οἷς ἡμῖν οἱ 5  
 θεοὶ δεδώκασιν ἀγαθοῖς, οὐδὲ ἀπαρχῆς χάριν ἢ δώρων τινῶν ἀντιδόσεως,  
 ἀφ' ὧν ἡμῖν παρέχουσιν οἱ θεοὶ πρεσβυτέρων δώρων· κοινὰ γὰρ ταῦτα  
 καὶ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους ἐστίν, ἀπὸ τε τῆς κοινῆς εἰληπται πολιτείας, τὸ τῶν  
 θεῶν παντελῶς ὑπερέχον καὶ τὸ τῆς τάξεως αὐτῶν, ὥς αἰτίων ἐξηρημέ-  
 νων, μηδαμῶς διασώζοντα. 10

6 Τὸ δὲ μέγιστον τὸ δραστήριον τῶν θυσιῶν, καὶ διὰ τί μάλιστα  
 τοσαῦτα ἐπιτελεῖ, ὥς μήτε λοιμῶν παῦλαν μήτε λιμῶν ἢ ἀφορίας χωρὶς  
 αὐτῶν γίνεσθαι, μήτε ὄμβρων αἰτήσεις, μήτε τὰ τιμιώτερα τούτων, ὅσα  
 εἰς ψυχῆς κάθαρσιν ἢ τελείωσιν ἢ τὴν ἀπὸ τῆς γενέσεως ἀπαλλαγὴν συμ-  
 [207] βάλλεται, ταῦτα δὴ οὖν οὐδ' ὅλως ἐνδείκνυνται | οἱ τοιοῦτοι τρόποι τῶν 1  
 θυσιῶν. Ὡστε οὐκ ἂν τις αὐτοὺς δοκιμάσειε δικαίως ὥς ἐπαξίως τῶν  
 ἐν αὐταῖς ἔργων τὴν αἰτίαν ἀπολογιζομένους, ἀλλ' εἴπερ ἄρα, ὥς ἐπακο-  
 λουθοῦντας καὶ κατὰ δεύτερον τρόπον συνηρητημένους τοῖς πρώτοις καὶ  
 πρεσβυτάτοις αἰτίαις δευτέρως ἂν αὐτοὺς παραδέξαιτο. 5

7 Ἀπαιτεῖ δὴ οὖν ὁ λόγος εἰπεῖν κατὰ τί τὸ ποιητικὸν ἔχουσι τῶν  
 πραγμάτων αἱ θυσίαι καὶ τὸ συνηρητημένον πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς προηγουμέ-  
 νως αἰτίους τῶν γιγνομένων. Ἐὰν δὲ λέγωμεν ὥς ἐν ἐνὶ ζώῳ τῷ παντὶ

[206].1 ἐρῶ || 2 ἔπεσθαι = Plato, conv., 210a3-4 || 4 οὐδέποτε cj. Gale: οὐδὲν ποτε VM || 9 παντελῶς V: om. M || 12 ἀφορίας M et (o supra ω) V<sup>c</sup>: ἀφωρίας V || [207].2 ἐπαξίως VM: ἀπαξίως cj. B || 3 ἀπολογιζομένους M: ἀπολογιζομένου V || 7-8 προηγουμένως VM: προηγουμένους cj. B

5 As for the more serious question which you raise about a more serious subject, how can I, when it requires a long and complex exegesis, give you a reply which will be both brief and adequate? Well, "I will speak, and will in no way fall short in good will. You, on your part, try to follow"<sup>290</sup> these concise indications of mine, some of which will expand into more extended exposition.<sup>291</sup> I propose, then, to impart to you my views on sacrifices. These are that one should never indulge in them simply for the sake of conferring honour, in the way in which we honour our benefactors, nor in acknowledgement of graces, in return for the good things which the gods have bestowed upon us, nor yet by way of first-fruits or a return of gifts, in recompense for the far superior gifts which the gods have provided for us;<sup>292</sup> for all these procedures are common also to our dealings with men, and are borrowed from vulgar social relations, whereas they do not at all preserve the utter superiority of the gods and their status as transcendent causal principles.

6 But the greatest thing, the effectiveness of sacrifices, the particular reason that they achieve such impressive results, to the extent that there can be no cessation of plagues or famines or barrenness without them, nor petitions for rain, nor yet more honourable ends than these, such as contribute to the purification or the perfection of the soul or to its freeing from the bonds of generation—this is not wholly made manifest by such modes of sacrifice. So no one would properly approve them as giving an adequate account of the cause of the achievements resulting from them, but, if anything, one would accept them as giving a lower-level account, and one that is dependent, as secondary, on the primary and most basic causes.

7 The argument therefore demands that we state in what respect sacrifices possess the capacity to produce results and connect us to the gods, who are the principal causes of what comes to

<sup>290</sup> By employing a well-known turn of phrase used by Diotima to her pupil Socrates in Plato, *Symp.* 210a3-4, "Abamon" cleverly assumes the mantle of that notable Platonic instructor, and thus puts Porphyry in his place once again. See the note to IV.1.

<sup>291</sup> This we take to be the meaning of ἐμφρασις here.

<sup>292</sup> These, interestingly enough, are reasons for sacrifice given by Theophrastus (frg. 584A Fortenbaugh et al.), as reported by Porphyry in his *De abstinencia* 2.24, a work that Iamblichus may have had a chance to study.

καὶ μίαν ζωὴν τὴν αὐτὴν πανταχοῦ ἔχοντι κοινωνία τῶν ὁμοίων δυνάμεων  
 ἢ τῶν ἐναντίων διάστασις ἢ τις ἐπιτηδειότης τοῦ ποιοῦντος πρὸς τὸ πά- 10  
 σχον συγκινεῖ τὰ ὅμοια καὶ ἐπιτήδεια, ὡσαύτως κατὰ μίαν συμπάθειαν  
 διήκουσα καὶ ἐν τοῖς πορρωτάτω ὡς ἔγγιστα οὖσι, λέγεται μὲν τι οὕτω  
 τῶν ἀληθῶν καὶ τῶν συνεπομένων ταῖς θυσίαις ἐξ ἀνάγκης, οὐ μὴν ὁ γε  
 [208] ἀληθῆς τρόπος τῶν | θυσιῶν ἐπιδείκνυται. Οὐ γὰρ ἐν τῇ φύσει καὶ ταῖς 1  
 φυσικαῖς ἀνάγκαις ἢ τῶν θεῶν κεῖται οὐσία, ὥστε πάθεισι φυσικοῖς συν-  
 εγείρεσθαι ἢ ταῖς διατεινούσαις δι' ὅλης τῆς φύσεως δυνάμεσιν, ἀλλ' ἔξω  
 τούτων καθ' ἑαυτὴν ὥριστα, οὐδὲν ἔχουσα πρὸς αὐτὰ κοινὸν οὔτε κατ'  
 οὐσίαν οὔτε κατὰ δύναμιν οὔτε κατ' ἄλλο οὐδ' ὅτιοῦν. 5

8 Τὰ δ' αὐτὰ ἄτοπα συμβαίνει καὶ εἴ τινες τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν ἀριθ-  
 μοὺς ὡς ἐπὶ τοῦ κροκοδείλου λαμβάνουσι τὴν ἐξηκοντάδα ὡς οἰκείαν ἡλίῳ,  
 ἢ λόγους φυσικοὺς ὡς τὰς τῶν ζώων δυνάμεις καὶ ἐνεργείας, οἷον κυ-  
 νὸς κυνοκεφάλου μυγαλῆς, κοινὰς οὖσας πρὸς σελήνην, ἢ τὰ ἔνυλα εἶδη

[207].11 καὶ V: om. M || 12 τι cj. Gale: σοι VM τοι (unde μέντοι) cj.  
 B || [208].9 μυγαλῆς cj. (υ supra ε) B<sup>3</sup>: μεγάλης VMB

be. If we say that, in the universe, being as it is one single living being, possessing a common life in all parts of itself, the communion of like powers, or the conflict of contrary ones, or a certain affinity of the active for the passive principle, propels together like and suitable elements, pervading in virtue of a single sympathy even the most distant things as if they were most contiguous, there is stated in this way something of the truth and of the necessary consequences of sacrifices, but there is still not demonstrated the true mode in which sacrifices operate. For it is not in nature, nor in physical necessity, that the essence of the gods resides, so as to be roused up by natural influences or by powers which extend throughout the whole of nature, but it is defined in its own terms, external to these influences, having nothing in common with them either in essence or in potency or in any other respect.<sup>293</sup>

8 The same absurd consequences result if, as do certain of our compatriots,<sup>294</sup> one attributes the efficacy of sacrifices to numerical relationships, as for instance when one assigns the number sixty to the crocodile as being proper to the sun;<sup>295</sup> or to natural reason-principles, as exemplified by the powers and activities of certain animals, such as the dog, the baboon or the field-mouse,<sup>296</sup> all of which have an affinity to the moon; or to

<sup>293</sup> This is an interesting piece of one-upmanship, which rejects, or at least puts in its place, the theory of cosmic sympathy adopted from Stoicism, and in particular from the Stoicism of Posidonius, by Plotinus (see *Enn.* 4.4.32), and subscribed to by Porphyry.

<sup>294</sup> “Abamon” is very much in character here, although note that he is referring to the inferior views of some of his colleagues. His own, superior, stance is expounded at V.10.

<sup>295</sup> Cf. Plutarch, *Is. Os.* 381c, where he mentions the connection of the crocodile with the number sixty: “they lay sixty eggs and hatch them in the same number of days, and those crocodiles that live longest live that number of years: and that is the primary measure for those who concern themselves with heavenly questions.” He probably gets this information from Aristotle’s *History of Animals* 5.33, 558a17. The crocodile god Sebek, worshipped in the Fayum, was indeed assimilated by the Egyptians to the Sun-God. Presumably, the point here is that the sacrifice of a crocodile, or of a baboon, for example, has power with the sun and moon respectively because of these affinities.

<sup>296</sup> The dog, as Anubis, is sacred to Isis, who is a moon-goddess (Plut. *Is. Os.* 368e–f). Strictly speaking, though, Anubis is a jackal-god; the dog in Greek mythology was sacred to Hecate, who was also a moon-goddess. The baboon (κυνονέφαλος) is mentioned by Plutarch as a sacred animal at 380e (it was the animal proper to Thoth), and the weasel—γάλη, not μυγαλή—at 381a,



(ὥσπερ ἐπὶ τῶν ἱερῶν ζώων θεωρεῖται κατὰ τὰς χροιάς καὶ πάσας τοῦ 10  
 σώματος μορφάς) ἢ ἄλλο τι τῶν περὶ τοῖς σώμασι τῶν ζώων ἢ τῶν ἄλ-  
 λων ὅπως οὖν προσαγομένων αἰτιῶνται τῆς ποιήσεως, ἢ μέλος (ὥς ἐπὶ  
 [209] τῆς καρδίας τοῦ ἀλεκτρυόνος) ἢ ἄλλα τινὰ τοιαῦτα τῶν περὶ τὴν φύσιν | 1  
 θεωρουμένων ὡς αἷτια τῆς ἐν ταῖς θυσίαις ἀπεργασίας λογίζονται. Καὶ  
 γὰρ ἐκ τούτων οὐχ ὑπερφυῖς τις ἢ τῶν θεῶν αἷτια δείκνυται, οὐδ' ὡς  
 τοιαύτη συγκινεῖται ταῖς θυσίαις, ὡς δὲ φυσικὴ κατεχομένη τε ὑπὸ τῆς  
 ὕλης καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν σωμάτων περιειλημμένη φυσικῶς αὐτοῖς συνεγείρεται 5  
 καὶ συναναπαύεται, καὶ ταῦτα τὰ περὶ τὴν φύσιν ὑπάρχοντα. Εἰ δ' ἄρα τι  
 καὶ τοιοῦτον ἐν ταῖς οὐσίαις συνακολουθεῖ, ὡς συναίτιον καὶ τὸν ὦν οὐκ  
 ἄνευ λόγον ἔχον, οὕτω συνήρτηται τοῖς προηγουμένοις αἰτίοις.

9 Βέλτιον οὖν φιλίαν καὶ οἰκείωσιν αἰτιᾶσθαι, σχέσιν τε συνδε-  
 τικὴν τῶν δημιουργούντων πρὸς τὰ δημιουργούμενα καὶ τῶν γεννώντων 10  
 πρὸς τὰ ἀπογεννώμενα. Ὅταν οὖν ταύτης προηγουμένης τῆς κοινῆς ἀρχῆς  
 λάβωμέν τι ζῶον ἢ τῶν φνομένων ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἀκραιφνῶς καὶ καθα-  
 ρῶς διασῶζον τὸ βούλημα τοῦ πεποιηκότος, τότε διὰ τοῦ τοιούτου τὴν  
 ἐπιβεβηκυῖαν ἀχράντως ἐπ' αὐτοῦ δημιουργικὴν αἰτίαν οἰκείως κινουμένη.

[208].12 μέλος] μέλους VM || 13 ἀλεκτρυόνος scr. Parthey: ἡλεκτρυῶ-  
 νος M ἡλλεκτρυῶνος V || [209].4 τοιαύτη cj. Gale: τοιαύτης VM τοιαύταις  
 (ης p. n., αις s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> | θυσίαις cj. (θυσ i. m.) B<sup>4</sup>: οὐσίαις VM || 6 ταῦτα  
 VM: τὰύτη (alt. α p. n., η s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>

the forms in matter,<sup>297</sup> as in the case of sacred animals, where one looks at them from the point of view of their colours and all their bodily traits; or indeed anything else connected with the bodies of animals or of any of the other things which are offered in sacrifice; or if they reckon a particular organ of the body (such as, for instance, the heart of the cock),<sup>298</sup> or any other such feature of a natural phenomenon as a cause of the efficacy of sacrifices. On this basis, after all, the causal activity of the gods is not shown to be something supernatural, nor is it as such that it is activated by sacrifices, but it is rather as a natural force, confined by matter and physically enveloped by bodies, that it is stirred up and laid to rest in concert with them, these being characteristics proper to nature. If, in fact, anything of the sort in substances is an accompaniment (of sacrifice), it will have the status of an auxiliary cause and a necessary consequence, and will in this way be dependent on the principal causes.

9 It is better, then, to seek the cause (of the efficacy of sacrifices) in friendship<sup>299</sup> and affinity, and in the relation that binds together creators with their creations and generators with their offspring. When therefore, under the guidance of this common principle, we comprehend that some animal or plant growing in the earth simply and purely preserves the intention of its maker, then, through this intermediary, we set in motion, in an appropriate manner, the creative cause which, without in any way

but they are connected explicitly with Isis, or the moon. However, at *Quaest. plat.* 4.5 (670b), Plutarch provides a connection between the *μυγαλῆ* and the moon: “the field-mouse is said to have been deified among the Egyptians because of its blindness, since they regarded darkness as superior to light; and they thought that that the field-mouse was born of ordinary mice every fifth generation at the new moon, and also that its liver was reduced in size at the dark of the moon.” Cf. also Pliny *Nat.* 2.41.6.

<sup>297</sup> The distinction between *φυσικοὶ λόγοι* and *ἐνυλα εἶδη* is a rather subtle one, but meaningful within the ambit of Neoplatonic metaphysics. The *λόγοι* will be emanations immanent in the physical world deriving from the transcendent Forms, while the *εἶδη* will be the manifestations of the *λόγοι* in individual physical objects.

<sup>298</sup> The cock was sacred to Apollo, who was by now securely identified with the sun.

<sup>299</sup> “Abamon” is referring to cosmic sympathy—or rather, supracosmic sympathy. Cf. the cosmic role Iamblichus gives to *φιλία* in the *De vita pythagorica*; see von Albrecht (1966); Thom (1997).

Πολλῶν δὲ οὐσῶν τούτων καὶ τῶν μὲν προσεχῶς συνηρημένων, ὥσπερ 15  
 [210] τῶν | δαιμονίων, τῶν δὲ ἀνωτέρω τούτων προτεταγμένων, ὥσπερ τῶν 1  
 θεῶν αἰτίων, ἔτι δὲ τούτων πρεσβυτάτης τῆς μιᾶς αἰτίας ἐξηγουμένης,  
 συγκινεῖται μὲν ὑπὸ τῆς τελείας θυσίας πάντα τὰ αἷτια· καθ' ἣν εἴληχε  
 δὲ ἕκαστα τάξιν, συγγενῶς πρὸς αὐτὴν οἰκειοῦται. Ἐὰν δὲ ἀτελής τις  
 γένηται, μέχρι τινὸς προχωρεῖ, προσώτερον δὲ προελθεῖν οὐχ οἷα τέ ἐστιν. 5  
 Ὅθεν δὴ καὶ πολλοὶ μὲν δαίμοσιν ἀγαθοῖς, πολλοὶ δὲ θεῶν ταῖς  
 τελευταῖς δυνάμεσι, πολλοὶ δὲ ταῖς περικοσμίαις ἢ περιγείοις δαιμόνων  
 ἢ θεῶν δυνάμεσιν ἡγοῦνται τὰς θυσίας προσάγεσθαι, μέρος μὲν τι τῶν  
 περὶ αὐτὰς οὐ ψευδῶς ἀφηγούμενοι, τὸ δ' ὅλον αὐτῆς τῆς δυνάμεως καὶ  
 τὰ πάντα ἀγαθὰ καὶ εἰς πᾶν τὸ θεῖον διατείνοντα οὐκ εἰδότες. 10

10 Ἡμεῖς δὲ πάντα προσιέμεθα, τὰ μὲν φυσικὰ καὶ ὡς ἐν ἐνὶ  
 ζῳῳ κατ' ἐπιτηδειότητα ἢ συμπάθειαν ἢ ἀντιπάθειαν συγκινούμενα, ὡς  
 τηνᾶλλως ὑποκείμενα καὶ ἐπακολουθοῦντα καὶ δουλεύοντα εἰς τὴν αἰτίαν  
 [211] τῆς τῶν θυσιῶν | ποιήσεως, τὰ δὲ τῶν δαιμόνων καὶ τῶν περιγείων ἢ 1  
 περικοσμίων θεῶν δυνάμεων, ὡς πρῶτα προσοικειούμενα κατὰ τὴν ὡς  
 πρὸς ἡμᾶς τάξιν· τὰ μέντοι τελειότατα καὶ ἡγεμονικώτατα τῶν αἰτίων  
 τῆς ἐν ταῖς θυσίαις ποιήσεως συνάπτεσθαι λέγομεν ταῖς δημιουργικαῖς  
 καὶ τελειοτάταις δυνάμεσιν· ἐπεὶ δὲ αὐταὶ περιέχουσιν ἐν ἑαυταῖς πάντα 5  
 ὅσα ποτέ ἐστιν αἷτια, συγκινεῖσθαι λέγομεν ἅμα μετὰ τούτων ἀθρόως καὶ  
 πάντα ὅσα ποτέ ἐστι ποιητικά, ἐκ δὲ ἀπάντων κοινὸν κατιέναι τὸ ὄφελος

[210].1 προτεταγμένων VM: πως τεταγμένων cj. (τεταγμένων i. m.) B<sup>3</sup>  
 πως τεταραγμένων cj. B || 2 τῆς μιᾶς M: μιᾶς V || 3-4 εἴληχε δὲ (sed δὲ  
 p. n.) V cum M: δὲ εἴληχε (δὲ i. m.) V<sup>2</sup> || 4 τις M: om. V || 13 τηνᾶλλως  
 (λ add.) V<sup>2</sup>: τηνᾶλλως VM || [211].2 προσοικειούμενα cj. Gale: προοικειούμενα  
 VM

compromising its purity, presides over this entity. Since these relationships are numerous, and some have an immediate source of influence, as in the case of daemonic ones, while others are superior to these, having divine causes, and, higher than these again, there is the one pre-eminent cause,<sup>300</sup> all these levels of cause are activated by the performance of perfect sacrifice; each level of cause is related to the sacrifice in accordance with the rank to which it has been allotted. If, on the other hand, the sacrifice is imperfect, its influence proceeds to a certain level, but it cannot progress beyond that.

In consequence of this, many people believe that sacrifices are offered to good daemons, many others, to the lowest powers of the gods,<sup>301</sup> and many others, again, to the encosmic or even terrestrial powers of daemons or gods.<sup>302</sup> In this conjecture they are at least partially not incorrect, but they fail to realise that the totality of their power and their benefits as a whole extend to the divine realm as a whole.

**10** As for us,<sup>303</sup> we recognise all levels, both beings on the level of nature, which are mutually stimulated to motion, as if parts of a single living thing, by virtue of aptitude, sympathy, or antipathy, as basic subjects which follow in the train of, and are subservient to, the cause of the efficacy of sacrifices; then the level of daemons and terrestrial or encosmic divine powers, as being our most immediate superiors in rank; the most perfect and dominant class of causes of the efficacy of sacrifices, however, we declare to be linked to the demiurgic and supremely perfect powers. And since these embrace within themselves all other causes of whatever sort, we declare that in conjunction with these are set in motion at once all others such as have any creative power, and from all these there descends a common benefit to the whole realm

<sup>300</sup> Presumably a reference to the One itself, or at least to the primary God revealed by "Abamon" at the beginning of Book VIII.

<sup>301</sup> These would have to be, in the context of the theology of Iamblican Platonism, manifestations of the god or goddess in question at the lowest level of the intellectual realm, the gods themselves being in the intelligible, or even the henadic, realm.

<sup>302</sup> That is to say, to such an entity as the physical sun or moon, as being the lowest manifestation of Apollo or Artemis.

<sup>303</sup> "Abamon" now turns to explaining the ideal "Egyptian" view, in contrast to the shakier viewpoints cited in V.8.

εἰς ὅλην τὴν γένεσιν, ἐνίοτε μὲν κατὰ πόλεις καὶ δήμους ἢ ἔθνη παντοδαπὰ ἢ μείζονας τούτων ἢ ἐλάττονας περιγραφάς, ἄλλοτε δὲ κατὰ οἴκους ἢ κατὰ ἄνδρα ἕκαστον παρεχούσας τὰ ἀγαθὰ ἀφθόγως, βουλήσει καὶ οὐ πάθει 10 τῶν χαριζομένων τὴν διανομὴν αὐτῶν ἀπεργαζομένων, νῶ τε ἀπαθεῖ κατ' οἰκειότητα καὶ συγγένειαν κρινόντων, ὥς δεῖ διδόναι, φιλίας τε μιᾶς, τῆς τὰ πάντα συνεχούσης, τὸν σύνδεσμον τοῦτον διὰ τινος ἀρρήτου κοινωνίας ἀπεργαζομένης.

[212] Πολὺν γὰρ ταῦτα ἀληθέστερά ἐστι καὶ μᾶλλον τῆς | τῶν θεῶν οὐ- 1 σίας καὶ δυνάμεως τυγχάνει ἢ ὁ σὺ καθυπονοεῖς, ὥς ἀτμοῖς θυσιῶν τοῖς ἀπὸ ζώων μάλιστα δελεάζονται· εἰ γὰρ τί που καὶ περὶκειται τοῖς δαίμοσι σῶμα, ὃ δὴ τινες τρέφεσθαι ἀπὸ τῶν θυσιῶν νομίζουσιν, ἄτρεπτόν ἐστι τοῦτο καὶ ἀπαθὲς ἀγροειδές τε καὶ ἀνενδεές, ὥς μήτε ἀπορρεῖν τι 5 ἀπ' αὐτοῦ μήτ' ἐπιρροῆς ἔξωθεν αὐτὸ προσδεῖσθαι. Εἰ δ' ἄρα καὶ τοῦτο τις θεῖη, τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ ἀέρος ἀνέκλειπτον ἔχοντος ἀπὸ τῶν περὶ τὴν γῆν τὴν ἀναθυμίασιν, περικεχυμένου τε πανταχόθεν ἐπίσης τοῦ τοιοῦτου ρεύματος, τίς ἂν ἔτι χρεῖα αὐτοῖς εἴη τῶν θυσιῶν; ἀλλ' οὐδὲ δι' ἴσον τοῖς ἀπορρέουσιν ἀναπληροῖ τὰ ἐπεισιόντα συμμετρως, ὥς 10 μήτε ὑπερβολὴν ἐπικρατεῖν μήτε ἔλλειψιν ποτε ἐγγίγνεσθαι, ἰσότητα δὲ πάντη καὶ ὁμαλότητα τῶν δαιμονίων σωμάτων ὥσαύτως ὑπάρχειν. Οὐ γὰρ δήπου τοῖς μὲν ἐν γῇ καὶ θαλάττῃ πᾶσι ζώοις ὁ δημιουργὸς ἀφθονον καὶ ἔτοιμον διατροφὴν παρέθηκε, τοῖς δὲ κρείττοσιν ἡμῶν ἔνδειαν ταύ- [213] τῆς ἐνεποίησεν. | Οὐδὲ τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις ζώοις ἐξ ἐαντῶν ἔμφυτον παρέσχε 1 τὴν εὐπορίαν τῶν καθ' ἡμέραν ἐπιτηδείων, τοῖς δαίμοσι δὲ ἐπέισακτον καὶ

of generation, sometimes upon cities and peoples, or nations of all sorts, or other segments of humanity larger or smaller than these, at other times bestowing benefits ungrudgingly upon households or individuals, carrying out this apportionment of their own free will, and not under any pressure from the would-be beneficiaries, making their judgement with an intellect free from passion, out of a sense of affinity and kinship, as to how they should grant their favours, one single bond of friendship, embracing the totality of beings, effecting this bond through an ineffable process of communion.<sup>304</sup>

This, after all, is a truer approach, and one much more appropriate to the essence and power of the gods, than what you are suggesting, “that they are ensnared by the vapours of, in particular, animal sacrifices.” For even if there is something in the nature of a body enveloping daemons, which some hold to be nourished by sacrifices, this is unchangeable and impassible, luminous and free from needs,<sup>305</sup> so that nothing flows out from it, nor does it require any influx from outside. And even if one were to postulate this, on the grounds that the cosmos and the air within it receive unceasing exhalations from the terrestrial regions, such inflows being spread about from all quarters equally, yet what need do daemons have of sacrifices? In any case, what flows in is not going to compensate in any symmetrical manner for what flows out from them, in such a way that no excess should obtain nor deficiency should ever arise, to ensure that daemonic bodies should enjoy unvarying equilibrium and uniformity. For it is surely not the case that the creator<sup>306</sup> has set before all living creatures on sea and land copious and readily available sustenance, but for those beings superior to us has contrived a deficiency of this. He would not, surely, have provided for all other living things, naturally and from their own resources, an abundance of the daily necessities of life, while to daemons he gave a source of nourishment which

<sup>304</sup> This section constitutes an eloquent statement of what one might term a Neoplatonic theory of divine grace, using the concepts of *συμπάθεια* and *οικειώσεις* to express not just the affinity of entities within the cosmos for each other, but of supracosmic forces with intracosmic entities.

<sup>305</sup> Another reference to the doctrine of the “pneumatic vehicle” of the soul, though with particular relevance to the daemonic level of being.

<sup>306</sup> The persona of “Abamon” appears abandoned more blatantly than usual; the *δημιουργός* here is thoroughly Platonic.

παρ' ἡμῶν τῶν ἀνθρώπων συντελουμένην ἔδωκε τὴν διατροφήν· καὶ ὡς  
 ἔοικεν, ἐὰν ἡμεῖς δι' ἀργίαν ἢ ἄλλην τινὰ πρόφασιν κατολιγορήσωμεν τῆς  
 τοιαύτης εἰσφορᾶς, ἐνδεῇ τῶν δαιμόνων τὰ σώματα ἔσται, ἀσυμμετρίας 5  
 τε καὶ ἀταξίας μεθεξεί.

Διὰ τί οὖν οἱ ταῦτα λέγοντες οὐ καὶ τὴν ὅλην ἀναστρέφουσι τάξιν,  
 ὥστε ἡμᾶς ἐν καλλίονι ποιεῖν τάξει καὶ δυνατωτέρους; εἰ γὰρ τροφείας  
 ἡμᾶς καὶ ἀποπληρωτὰς ποιοῦσι τῶν δαιμόνων, ἡμεῖς τῶν δαιμόνων ἐσό- 10  
 μεθα αἰτιώτεροι· ἕκαστον γὰρ ἀφ' οὗ γέγονεν, ἀπὸ τούτου καὶ τὴν τροφήν  
 καὶ τελειότητα προσλαμβάνει. Καὶ τοῦτο ἴδοι μὲν ἄν τις καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν φα-  
 νερῶν γενέσεων. Ἔστι δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν κοσμικῶν θεωρεῖν· καὶ γὰρ τὰ  
 περιγεία ἀπὸ τῶν οὐρανίων τρέφεται. Πολὺν δὲ διαφερόντως ἐπὶ τῶν ἀφα-  
 νῶν αἰτίων κατάδηλον γίγνεται. Ψυχὴ μὲν γὰρ ἀπὸ νοῦ τελειοῦται, φύσις  
 [214] δὲ ἀπὸ ψυχῆς, τὰ τε ἄλλα ὡσαύτως | ἀπὸ τῶν αἰτίων τρέφεται· εἰ δὲ ἀδύ- 1  
 νατον ἀρχηγὸς ἡμᾶς εἶναι τῶν δαιμόνων, τῷ αὐτῷ λόγῳ καὶ τῆς τροφῆς  
 αὐτῶν ἔσμεν αἵτιοι.

**11** Δοκεῖ δ' ἔμοιγε καὶ ἄλλο διαμαρτάνειν ἢ παροῦσα ἐπιζήτησις.  
 Ἄγνοεῖ γὰρ τὴν διὰ τοῦ πυρὸς προσαγωγὴν τῶν θυσίων, ὡς δαπανητικὴ 5  
 μᾶλλον τῆς ὕλης ἐστὶ καὶ ἀναιρετικὴ, ἀφομοιωτικὴ τε πρὸς ἐαυτὴν ἄλλ'  
 οὐχὶ αὐτὴ ἀφομοιούμενὴ πρὸς τὴν ὕλην, ἀναγωγὸς τε ἐπὶ τὸ θεῖον καὶ  
 οὐράνιον πῦρ καὶ ἄνθρον ἄλλ' οὐχὶ κάτω βρίθουσα περὶ τὴν ὕλην καὶ τὴν  
 γένεσιν. Εἰ μὲν γὰρ ὕλης ἦν γλυκνθυμία τις ἢ διὰ τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς ὕλης ἀτ-  
 μῶν δελεάζουσα ἀπόλαυσις, ἐχρῆν ἀκέραιον τὴν ὕλην εἶναι· πλείων γὰρ 10

[213].4 κατολιγορήσωμεν scr. Parthey: κατολιγορήσωμεν M κατολιγο-  
 ρήσωμεν V || 8 δυνατωτέρους V: δυνατωτέρῃ M || [214].3 ἔσμεν VM: οὐκ  
 ἔσμεν (οὐκ i. m.) V<sup>2</sup> | αἵτιοι VM: ἀνάτιοι cj. Nock

was adventitious and dependent on the contributions of us mortals; and thus, it would seem, if we through laziness or some other pretext were to neglect such contributions, the bodies of daemons would suffer deprivation, and would experience disequilibrium and disorder.

Why, then, do the advocates of this view not go on to overturn the whole order of nature, so as to place us in a higher rank, and make us more powerful (than the daemons)? For if they make us the nourishers and fulfillers of the needs of the daemons, we will be causally superior to the daemons; for it is a general rule that each thing derives its nurture and fulfilment from that to which it owes its generation. This truth one may observe at the level of visible generation. One may see it, for instance, in the case of things in the cosmos; for terrestrial things derive their nourishment from celestial sources.<sup>307</sup> But it is more especially clear in the case of invisible causes. For soul is brought to completion by intellect, and nature by soul, and all other things similarly are nourished by their causes. If, then, it is impossible that we are the originating causes of daemons, by the same reasoning we are not<sup>308</sup> responsible for their nourishment.

**11** The present line of enquiry seems to me to exhibit also another error. For it ignores the fact that the offering of sacrifices by means of fire is actually such as to consume and annihilate matter, assimilating it to itself rather than assimilating itself to matter, and elevating it towards the divine and heavenly and immaterial<sup>309</sup> fire, instead of being weighed<sup>310</sup> downwards towards matter and the realm of generation. For if, in fact, the enjoyment ensnaring (daemons) by means of exhalations from matter were (based on) a sort of natural attractiveness<sup>311</sup> of matter, then the

<sup>307</sup> Presumably he is thinking of the influence of the sun on all living things.

<sup>308</sup> Reading οὐκ before ἐσμέν with Ficino, as seems necessary. It is unclear why Des Places thought it could be omitted.

<sup>309</sup> "Abamon" characterises the πῦρ τεχνικόν of the Stoic materialists as ἄυλον.

<sup>310</sup> βρῖθειν is a poetic verb, used twice by Plotinus, but probably of Chaldaean provenance. Cf. *Orac. chald.* frg. 213.

<sup>311</sup> γλυκυθυμία, a rare word, used by Plato at *Leg.* 635c (also by Plutarch, e.g. *Tranq. an.* 476d) to signify a weakness or "soft spot" for (usually πρὸς) something such as pleasure. It is used somewhat differently here, with a dependent possessive genitive.



ἂν οὕτως ἢ ἀπ' αὐτῆς ἀπορροή τοῖς μεταλαμβάνουσι προσεγένετο· νῦν δὲ ἐμπίπρται πᾶσα καὶ καταναλίσκεται καὶ εἰς τὴν τοῦ πυρός καθαρότητα καὶ λεπτότητα μεταβάλλεται· ὁ καὶ αὐτὸ σημειὸν ἐστὶν ἐναργὲς τοῦ ἐναντίου ἢ οὐδ' σὺν λέγεις. Ἀπαθεῖς τε γάρ εἰσιν οἱ κρείττονες, οἷς φίλον ἐστὶ τὸ τὴν ὕλην ἐκκόπτεσθαι διὰ τοῦ πυρός, καὶ ἡμᾶς ἀπαθεῖς ἀπεργάζονται· 15  
 [215] καὶ τὰ ἐν ἡμῖν | ἀφομοιοῦνται τοῖς θεοῖς, ὥσπερ δὴ καὶ τὸ πῦρ ἀφομοιοῖ 1  
 πάντα τὰ στερεὰ καὶ ἀντίτυπα τοῖς φωτεινοῖς καὶ λεπτοῖς σώμασιν, ἡμᾶς τε ἀνάγει διὰ τῶν θυσιῶν καὶ τοῦ θυηπολικοῦ πυρός πρὸς τὸ τῶν θεῶν πῦρ κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ τῇ τοῦ πυρός ἀναγωγῇ τῇ πρὸς τὸ πῦρ ἐπαγομένη καὶ ἀνελεύση τὰ καταγωγὰ καὶ ἀντίτυπα πρὸς τὰ θεῖα καὶ τὰ οὐράνια. 5

**12** Ὡς γὰρ ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν, οὔτε ἀπὸ τῆς ὕλης οὔτε ἀπὸ τῶν στοιχείων οὔτε ἀπ' ἄλλον τινὸς τῶν γινγνωσκομένων ἡμῖν σωμάτων ἐστὶ τὸ ὑψηρετοῦν τοῖς δαίμοσιν ὄχημα σωματοειδές. Τίς ἂν οὖν ἀπ' ἄλλης οὐσίας εἰς ἄλλην οὐσίαν γένοιτο ἂν ποτε ἀποπλήρωσις; ἢ τίς ἀπόλυσις ἀπὸ τῶν ἀλλοτρίων τοῖς ἀλλοτρίοις δύναται προστίθεσθαι; οὐκ ἔστιν οὐδεμία, ἀλ- 10  
 λὰ πολὺ μᾶλλον ὥσπερ οἱ θεοὶ τῷ κεραυνῷ πυρὶ τέμνουσι τὴν ὕλην καὶ χωρίζουσιν ἀπ' αὐτῆς τὰ ἄνυλα μὲν κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν κρατούμενα δὲ ἀπ' αὐτῆς καὶ πεπεδημένα, ἀπαθῇ τε ἐξ ἐμπαθῶν ἀπεργάζονται, οὕτω καὶ τὸ μιμούμενον παρ' ἡμῖν πῦρ τοῦ θείου πυρός τὴν ἐνέργειαν ἀναίρει τὸ 1  
 [216] ὕλικόν πᾶν ἐν ταῖς | θυσίαις, τὰ τε προσαγόμενα τῷ πυρὶ καθαίρει καὶ 1  
 ἀπολύει τῶν ἐν τῇ ὕλῃ δεσμῶν, ἐπιτήδειά τε διὰ καθαρότητα φύσεως πρὸς τὴν τῶν θεῶν κοινωνίαν ἀπεργάζεται, καὶ ἡμᾶς διὰ τῶν αὐτῶν τρόπων ἀπολύει τῶν τῆς γενέσεως δεσμῶν καὶ ἀφομοιοῖ τοῖς θεοῖς, πρὸς τε τὴν φιλίαν αὐτῶν ἐπιτηδεύουσιν ἐργάζεται, καὶ περιάγει τὴν ἔνυλον ἡμῖν φύσιν 5  
 ἐπὶ τὴν ἄνυλον.

**13** Κοινῶς μὲν οὕτω τὰς ἀτόπους ὑπονοίας ἀνελόντες περὶ θυσιῶν ἀντ' αὐτῶν τὰς ἀληθεῖς νοήσεις ἀντεισηγάγομεν κατ' ἰδίαν περὶ ἐκάστου θυσιῶν εἶδους, ὥς ὁ ἴδιος λόγος περὶ τῶν θυσιῶν ἀπαιτεῖ τὴν διάρθρω- 10  
 σιν, ὅστις ἄλλης τέ ἐστι πραγματείας καὶ ἅμα ἀπὸ τῶν εἰρημένων, ὅστις

[215].3 θυηπολικοῦ M: θυηποτικῷ V || 13 ἐμπαθῶν (pr. α p. n., ἐμ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: ἀπαθῶν VM || [216].10 τέ VM (tuetur Deubner p. 639): an γέ?

matter should have remained intact; for in this way the emanation from it would become greater to those that participate in it. But as it is, the matter is all burned up and consumed, and transformed into the purity and subtlety of fire; and this is a clear indication of the opposite of what you are maintaining. In fact, the superior classes of being are impassive, and it is pleasing to them that the matter is eliminated by the fire, and they render us also impassive; they assimilate what is in us to the gods, even as the fire assimilates all that is solid and resistant to luminous and subtle bodies, and leads us up by means of sacrifices and sacrificial<sup>312</sup> fire towards the fire of the gods, in the same way that the fire ascends towards the fire which attracts it, and draws up downward-tending and resistant entities to divine and heavenly ones.

**12** In a word, it is not from matter nor from the elements nor from any other body known to us that the body-like<sup>313</sup> vehicle that serves daemons is composed. What fulfilment, then, can come from one quite different essence to another? Or what benefit can one alien entity derive from another? There is none, in fact, but the truth is rather that, even as the gods<sup>314</sup> cut through matter by the fire of the thunderbolt, and separate off from it those elements which are immaterial in their essence, but are overcome by it and imprisoned in it, and render them impassible instead of passible, even so the fire of our realm, imitating the activity of the divine fire, destroys all that is material in the sacrifices, purifies the offerings with fire and frees them from the bonds of matter, and renders them suitable, through the purification of their nature, for consorting with the gods, and by the same procedures liberates us from the bonds of generation and makes us like to the gods, and renders us worthy to enjoy their friendship, and turns round our material nature towards the immaterial.

**13** In general, then, we have disposed of the unreasonable assumptions that have been advanced about sacrifices, and have put in their place the correct conceptions relative to each form of sacrifice, because the proper treatment of sacrifices demands such a correction of perspective. This, however, is matter for another

<sup>312</sup> *θυηπολικός*: this adjective is first found here.

<sup>313</sup> This seems the necessary translation of *σωματοειδής* here. Des Places ("quasi-corporel") and Hopfner ("körperartige") understand it similarly.

<sup>314</sup> There may here be a reference to Chaldaean telestic purifications, or simply to the belief that lightning sanctifies what it strikes.

εὐφρύνῃς ἐστι καὶ ἀφ' ἐνὸς ἐπὶ πολλὰ δυνατὸς διατείνειν τὴν διάνοιαν ῥα-  
 δίως γινώσεται ἀπὸ τούτων καὶ τὰ παραλειπόμενα. Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν ὥμην  
 ταῦτα ἱκανῶς εἰρησθαι, τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ διότι τῆς τῶν θεῶν ἐπαξίως εἶχε  
 καθαρότητος· ἐπεὶ δὲ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἴσως ἂν ἀπιστίαν παρὰσχοιτο μὴ οὐκ  
 ἢ ἐναργῆ, καὶ ὑποψίαν ὥς μὴ κινουῖντα τὴν διάνοιαν μηδ' ἐπιλαμβανόμε- 15  
 [217] να τῶν τῆς ψυχῆς διαλογισμῶν, βούλομαι περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν ὀλίγα πλείονα 1  
 διελθεῖν, καὶ ἐὰν οἷόν τε ἦ, γνωριμώτερα τεκμήρια τῶν ἥδη προειρημένων  
 παραθέσθαι.

**14** Ἀρχὴ δὲ πασῶν ἀρίστη ἢ τῆς τῶν θεῶν τάξεως τὸν θεσμὸν  
 τῶν θυσιῶν ἐχόμενον ἐπιδείκνυσιν· ἄνωθεν οὖν τοὺς μὲν ὑλαίους τῶν θεῶν 5  
 τοὺς δὲ ἀύλους ὑποθώμεθα· ὑλαίους μὲν τοὺς τὴν ὕλην περιέχοντας ἐν  
 ἑαυτοῖς καὶ διακοσμοῦντας, ἀύλους δὲ παντελῶς τοὺς ἐξηρημένους ἀπὸ  
 τῆς ὕλης καὶ ὑπερέχοντας. Κατὰ δὲ τὴν τῶν ἱερέων τέχνην ἀρχεσθαι χρὴ  
 τῶν ἱεροουργιῶν ἀπὸ τῶν ὑλαίων· οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἄλλως ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀύλους θεοὺς  
 γένοιτο ἢ ἀνάβασις. Οὔτοι δὴ οὖν ἔχουσί τινα κοινωνίαν πρὸς τὴν ὕλην 10  
 καθόσον αὐτῆς ἐπιβεβήκασιν· οἱ αὐτοὶ δὴ οὖν καὶ τῶν περὶ τὴν ὕλην ἐγ-  
 γιγνομένων ἐπάρχουσιν, οἷον διαιρέσεων, πληγῆς ἀντιτύπου, μεταβολῆς  
 γενέσεως φθορᾶς πάντων τῶν ἐνύλων σωμάτων.

Εἰ δὴ τις τοὺς τοιούτους βούλοιτο θεραπεύειν θεουργικῶς, ἢ πεφύ-  
 [218] κασι καὶ ἢ τὴν ἀρχὴν εἰλήχασι ταύτῃ προσ|εκτέον αὐτοῖς τὴν θεραπείαν, 1  
 ἐνύλοις οὖσιν αὐτοῖς ἔνυλον οὔσαν· οὕτω γὰρ ἂν ὅλους αὐτοὺς δι' ὅλων  
 προσαγοίμεθα εἰς οἰκείωσιν, συγγένειάν τε αὐτοῖς ἐν τῇ θεραπείᾳ προσ-  
 φέροιμεν τὴν προσήκουσαν· καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν θυσιῶν τοίνυν τὰ νεκρὰ σώματα  
 καὶ ἀπεστερημένα τῆς ζωῆς, φόνος τε τῶν ζώων καὶ κατανάλωσις τῶν 5

[216].14 παρὰσχοιτο scripsi: παρὰσχοι τὸ VM παρὰσχοι τὰ (alt. o can-  
 cell., α s. v.) V<sup>r</sup> || 15 ἢ VM: εἶναι cj. Gale || [217].2 ἢ cj. Parthey: ἦν VM  
 || 4 ἢ M: ἢ i. m. V<sup>2</sup> ἢ V | θεσμὸν cj. Gale: δεσμὸν VM || 12 ἐπάρχουσιν  
 (ἐ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: ὑπάρχουσιν VM || [218].2 ὅλους scripsi: ὅλης VM ὅλοις (οι s. v.)  
 V<sup>2</sup> | αὐτοὺς VM: αὐτοῖς (οι s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>

discourse, and in any case, on the basis of what has been said so far, anyone of reasonable intelligence, and who is capable of extending his thought from one instance to a multiplicity, will easily be able to fill in what is missing from what has been said here. I, at any rate, would have thought that enough had now been said, not least for the reason that it has been presented in a manner worthy of the purity of the gods; but since to others it might provoke doubts as to its clarity, and arouse suspicion because it does not appeal to the intelligence or address itself to the reasonings of the soul, I wish to say a little more on the subject, and, if possible, to offer some more perspicuous proofs than the foregoing.

**14** The best way of all to begin is to show that the law<sup>315</sup> of sacrifices is dependent upon the order of the gods themselves. Let us, therefore, posit once again that, among the gods, some are material, others immaterial.<sup>316</sup> Those are material that embrace matter within themselves and impose order upon it, while immaterial are those that are exempt from matter and rise above it. According to the art of the priests, one must begin the sacrificial process from the material gods; for by no other route is ascent possible to the immaterial gods. The material gods, then, have a certain communion with matter inasmuch as they preside over it; it is they, therefore, that are responsible for those phenomena that arise in matter, such as divisions, impacts and resistance, and the alteration, generation and destruction of all material bodies.

If, then, one wishes to worship such gods with theurgic rites, it is in accordance with their nature and with the sphere of authority which they have been allotted that one should render them worship, that is to say, material worship, even as they are material; for it is thus that we would draw them in their entirety into familiarity with us, and offer them in our worship a proper degree of affinity. And so, in sacrifices, dead bodies deprived of life, the slaughter of animals and the consumption of their bodies,

<sup>315</sup> It should be noted that *θεσμόν* is Thomas Gale's conjecture for the *δεσμόν* of the MSS. Some sense might be made of *δεσμόν*, however, if one rendered it "binding quality," or something similar. Ficino translates it as *con-textum*.

<sup>316</sup> This could be a reference back to I.9, where he discusses the nature of encosmic divinities, which are the object of reference here.

σωμάτων μεταβολή τε παντοία καὶ φθορά, καὶ ὅλως ἢ πρόπτωσις <τοῖς>  
 τῆς ὕλης προϋσταμένοις θεοῖς προσήκει· οὐκ αὐτοῖς δι' ἑαυτούς, ἀλλὰ διὰ  
 τὴν ὕλην ἧς ἐπάρχουσιν. Εἰ γὰρ καὶ ὅτι μάλιστα χωριστοὶ εἰσιν ἀπ' αὐτῆς,  
 ἀλλ' ὅμως αὐτῇ πάρεισι· καὶ εἰ περιέχουσιν αὐτὴν ἐν αὐτῷ δυνάμει, σὺν  
 αὐτῇ ὑπάρχουσι· τὰ τε διοικούμενα τοῖς διοικοῦσιν ἐστὶν οὐκ ἀλλότρια καὶ 10  
 τὰ διακοσμούμενα τοῖς διακοσμοῦσι, τοῖς χρωμένοις τε τὰ ὑπηρετοῦντα  
 ὡς ὄργανά ἐστιν οὐκ ἀνάρμοστα. Διόπερ τοῖς μὲν αὐλοῖς θεοῖς ὕλην προσ-  
 φέρειν διὰ θυσιῶν ἐστὶν ἀλλότριον, τοῖς δ' ἐνύλοις οἰκειότατον ἅπασιν.

[219]

| 15 Σκεψόμεθα δὴ τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο συμφώνως τοῖς προει- 1  
 ρημένοις καὶ τὴν ἡμετέραν διπλὴν κατάστασιν· ὅτε μὲν γὰρ ὅλοι ψυχὴ  
 γιγνόμεθα καὶ ἐσμεν ἔξω τοῦ σώματος μετέωροί τε τῷ νῷ, μεθ' ὅλων  
 τῶν αὐλῶν θεῶν μετεωροπολοῦμεν· ὅτε δ' αὖ δεδέμεθα ἐν τῷ ὀστρεώδει  
 σώματι, καὶ ὑπὸ τῆς ὕλης κατεχόμεθα καὶ ἐσμεν σωματοειδεῖς· πάλιν οὖν 5  
 ἦκει τῆς θρησκείας ὁ διπλοῦς τρόπος· ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἔσται ἀπλοῦς ἀσώμα-  
 τος ἀγνὸς ἀπὸ πάσης γενέσεως, ὅστις ταῖς ἀχράντοις ἐπιβάλλει ψυχαῖς,  
 ὁ δ' ἀναπιμπλάμενος τῶν σωμάτων καὶ τῆς ἐνύλου πάσης πραγματείας,  
 ὅστις ταῖς μὴ καθααῖς πρόειψι ψυχαῖς μηδὲ ἀπολυθείσαις πάσης γενέ- 10  
 σεως. Καὶ θυσιῶν τοίνυν τίθημι διττὰ εἶδη· τὰ μὲν τῶν ἀποκεκαθαρωμένων 10

[218].6 <τοῖς> cj. Westerink || 7 προϋσταμένους id.: -μένης codd. || 8  
 χωριστοὶ M et (οι ex α, ut vid.) V<sup>2</sup>: χωριστά (ut vid.) V || [219].2 ὅλοι V et  
 (ut vid.) M: ὅλη (η ex ο) M<sup>2</sup> || 3 γιγνόμεθα M: γινώμεθα V

and every sort of change and destruction, and in general processes of dissolution<sup>317</sup> are suitable to those gods who preside over matter—not to them in themselves, but because of the matter over which they rule. For no matter how completely they may transcend it, nevertheless they are present to it; and even if they embrace it by virtue of an immaterial power, yet they subsist in combination with it; administered entities are not alien to their administrators, nor are the ordered to those that order them, and things that serve are not unfitted, as instruments, to those that make use of them. For this reason, to offer matter in sacrifices to immaterial deities is alien to them, but it is most proper to all material ones.

**15** Let us consider next, then, in accordance with what has been said so far, our double status. When we are become wholly soul, and are out of the body, and raised up in the intellect, we traverse the heights<sup>318</sup> in company with all the immaterial gods; but when again we are confined in our hard-shelled body,<sup>319</sup> we are held fast by matter and are corporeal. Once again, then, we come back to the necessity of the double mode of worship; for the one type will be simple and immaterial and purified from all taint of generation, that which relates to unpolluted souls, whereas the other is filled with bodies and every sort of material business, that which is proper to souls which are not pure nor released from all generation. And so I postulate two sorts of sacrifice; the one

<sup>317</sup> There is some textual difficulty here. We accept, with Des Places, the conjecture of Westerink, who places τοῖς before τῆς ὕλης, separating it thus from πρόπτωσις. The meaning of πρόπτωσις remains somewhat problematical, but it seems best to take it as “dissolution” or “decay.”

<sup>318</sup> This verb recalls the language of Plato at *Phaedr.* 246c describing the heavenly ride, though assuming the variant (favoured by the Neoplatonists) μετεωροπολεῖν for μετεωροπορεῖν of the MSS. Interestingly, the same verb is used by Proclus to describe a piece of overly ingenious exegesis by Iamblichus in his *Timaean* commentary (*Comm. Tim.* 2.240.5).

<sup>319</sup> This term also derives ultimately from *Phaedr.* 250c6, where we are described as carrying about our body with us like an oyster in its shell, though the term ὀστρεῶδες to describe the physical body is the product of later scholasticism. It becomes more or less a technical term with Proclus; cf. *Comm. Tim.* 3.236.26–29; 298.16 and 28; *Comm. Resp.* 2.126.12—nearly always in contrast to the pneumatic vehicle. Iamblichus seems the earliest attested user of the term (he also employs it in the *De anima* §26 Finamore-Dillon [ap. Stobaeus 1:378 Wachsmuth]). Cf. IV.12 and note ad loc.

παντάπασιν ἀνθρώπων, οἷα ἐφ' ἑνὸς ἄν ποτε γένοιτο σπανίως, ὥς φη-  
 σιν Ἡράκλειτος, ἢ τινων ὀλίγων εὐαριθμήτων ἀνδρῶν, τὰ δ' ἔνυλα καὶ  
 σωματοειδῇ καὶ διὰ μεταβολῆς συνιστάμενα, οἷα τοῖς ἔτι κατεχομένοις  
 [220] ὑπὸ τοῦ σώματος ἀρμόζει. Πόλεσι τοίνυν | καὶ δήμοις οὐκ ἀπολελυμένοις 1  
 τῆς γενεσιουργοῦ μοίρας καὶ τῆς ἀντεχομένης τῶν σωμάτων κοινωνίας εἰ  
 μὴ δώσει τις τὸν τοιοῦτον τρόπον τῆς ἀγιστείας, ἀμφοτέρων διαμαρτήσῃ,  
 καὶ τῶν ἀύλων ἀγαθῶν καὶ τῶν ἐνύλων· τὰ μὲν γὰρ οὐ δύναται δέξασθαι,  
 τοῖς δὲ οὐ προσάγει τὸ οἰκεῖον. Καὶ ἅμα ἕκαστος καθότι ἐστίν, οὐ μὲν- 5  
 τοι καθὼ μὴ ἐστὶ, ποιεῖται τῆς ὁσίας τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν· οὐκ ἄρα δεῖ αὐτὴν  
 ὑπεραίρειν τὸ οἰκεῖον μέτρον τοῦ θεραπεύοντος.

Ὁ δ' αὐτός ἐστὶ μοι λόγος καὶ περὶ τῆς συμπλοκῆς τῆς οἰκείως  
 συναρμοζομένης τῶν θεραπευόντων ἀνδρῶν καὶ τῶν θεραπευομένων δυ-  
 νάμεων. Καὶ γὰρ ταύτην τὸν ἑαυτῇ πρόσφορον τρόπον τῆς θρησκείας 10  
 ἐκλέγεσθαι ἀξιῶ, ἅυλον μὲν τὴν ἀύλως συμμιγνυμένην καὶ ταῖς ἀσωμά-  
 τοις καθαρῶς δυνάμεσι πρὸς αὐτὰ καθαρῶς τὰ ἀσώματα συναπτομένην,  
 σωματοειδῶς δὲ τὴν σωματοειδῇ καὶ μετὰ σωμάτων συνηρητημένην, πρὸς  
 τὰς σώμασιν ἐπιβεβηκυίας οὐσίας ἀνακεραυνωμένην.

[221] | **16** Μὴ ἀτιμάσωμεν τοίνυν ἔτι καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα εἰπεῖν, ὥς πολ- 1  
 λάκις τῆς τοῦ σώματος ἔνεκα ἀναγκαίας χρείας διαπραγματενόμεθά τι  
 πρὸς τοὺς ἐφόρους τοῦ σώματος θεοὺς καὶ δαίμονας ἀγαθοὺς· οἷον κα-  
 θαίροντες αὐτὸ ἀπὸ κηλίδων παλαιῶν ἢ νόσων ἀπολύοντες καὶ ὑγείας 5  
 πληροῦντες, ἢ τὸ μὲν βαρὺ καὶ νωθρὸν ἀποκόπτοντες ἀπ' αὐτοῦ τὸ δὲ  
 κοῦφον καὶ δραστήριον αὐτῷ παρέχοντες, ἢ ἄλλο γέ τι τῶν πάντων ἀγα-  
 θῶν αὐτῷ παρασκευάζοντες. Τότε δὴ οὖν οὐ δῆπου νοερῶς καὶ ἀσωμά-  
 τως τὸ σῶμα μεταχειριζόμεθα· οὐ γὰρ πέφυκε τῶν τοιούτων τρόπων τὸ  
 σῶμα μετέχειν· τῶν δὲ συγγενῶν ἑαυτῷ μεταλαγχάνον, σώμασι σῶμα

[219].11 ἀνθρώπων V: ἀνθρώπω M || 13 κατεχομένοις M: μετεχομένοις  
 V || [220].5 καθότι scripsi: καθόσον codd. || 6 καθὼ VM: καθόσον cj. B |  
 ὁσίας M: οὐσίας V θυσίας cj. Gale Sicherl || 12 pr. καθαρῶς VM: καθαρχῶς  
 cj. B || 13 συνηρητημένην M: συνηρητημένων V

which is that of men who are entirely purified, which would only arise rarely, as Heraclitus says,<sup>320</sup> in the case of one or of some small, easily-counted number of men; the other being material and corporeal and based on alteration, as is suited to those still in the grip of the body. So if one does not grant some such mode of worship to cities and peoples not freed from the fated processes of generation and from a society dependent on the body, one will contrive to fail of both types of good, both the immaterial and the material; for they are not capable of receiving the former, and for the latter they are not making the right offering. Similarly, each person performs his cult according to the nature that he has, not that which he does not have; one should not, therefore, overstep the measure proper to the sacrificing agent.

The same goes, in my view, for the bond that properly binds together the worshippers with the powers worshipped. For I consider that this should select the mode of worship proper to itself in either case, immaterial in the case of that which involves mingling with the immaterial and which links us purely by means of pure<sup>321</sup> incorporeal powers with the incorporeal realities themselves; corporeal if the relationship is corporeal and depends on bodies, being involved with substances which preside over bodies.

**16** Let us not disdain, therefore, to make the following observation as well, that often it is by reason of bodily necessity that we are involved in some relationship with the gods and good daemons that watch over the body; as for instance when we are purifying it from long-standing impurities or freeing it from disease and filling it with health, or cutting away from it what is heavy and sluggish and providing it with what is light and active, or furnishing it with some other among all the goods. Then, indeed, we do not deal with the body on an intellectual and incorporeal plane, for the body does not naturally relate to such modes of treatment; it is, rather, through participating in what is akin to

<sup>320</sup> Diels-Kranz grant this the status of frg. 69 in their collection, but Marcovich (1967, 519), following Gomperz 26.378 ap. Diels, and Kranz himself, is perhaps correct to see it as a vague reminiscence of frg. 113: "for me, one man is the equal of ten thousand, if he be of the best sort." Otherwise, it is difficult to see what the original Heraclitean saying is. This is the fourth time that "Abamon" has quoted Heraclitus, cf. I.11.40.11; III.8.117.6; III.15.136.3.

<sup>321</sup> If the second  $\kappa\alpha\theta\alpha\rho\omega\varsigma$  is to be kept, we would prefer to read the former as  $\kappa\alpha\theta\alpha\rho\alpha\tilde{\iota}\varsigma$ , in accordance with a conjecture in B.



θεραπεύεται τε καὶ ἀποκαθαίρεται. Ἔσται δὲ οὖν καὶ ὁ τῶν θυσιῶν θε- 10  
 σμός ἐπὶ τῆς τοιαύτης χρείας ἐξ ἀνάγκης σωματοειδής, τὰ μὲν ἀποκόπτων  
 τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν περιττενόντων, τὰ δὲ ἀναπληρῶν ὅσα ἡμῖν ἐλλείπει, τὰ δὲ  
 εἰς συμμετρίαν ἄγων καὶ τάξιν ὅσα πλημμελῶς ἐπιτετάρακται. Καὶ μὴν  
 [222] πολλὰ καὶ πρὸς τὸν ἀνθρώπινον βίον ἐπιτηδείων δεόμενοι ἡμῖν γενέσθαι 1  
 παρὰ τῶν κρειττόνων ἱεροουργίαις χρώμεθα· ταῦτα δ' ἔστι δῆπου | κηδε-  
 μονίαν σώματι παρέχοντα ἢ ἐκείνων ἐπιμελούμενα ἃ τῶν σωμάτων ἕνεκα  
 κτῶμεθα.

17 Τί δὲ οὖν ἡμῖν ἔσται παρὰ τῶν ἐξηρημένων παντάπασιν θεῶν  
 πάσης ἀνθρωπίνης γενέσεως εἰς ἀκαρπλίαν ἢ ἀγονίαν ἢ περιουσίαν ἢ ἄλλο 5  
 τι τῶν τοῦ βίου πραγμάτων ἐχομένων; οὐδὲν οὐδαμῶς· τοὺς γὰρ ἀπο-  
 λελυμένους πάντων οὐκ ἔνεστι τῶν τοιούτων ἐφάπτεσθαι δόσεων. Ἄλλ'  
 εἰ μὲν τις λέγοι ὅτι περιέχουσι καὶ τοὺς τοιούτους θεοὺς οἱ παντελῶς  
 ἄνθρωποι, περιέχοντες δὲ αὐτοὺς καὶ τὰ δῶρα αὐτῶν κατὰ μίαν τὴν πρῶ-  
 την αἰτίαν συνειλήφασιν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, λέγοι τινα ἂν οὕτω κατιοῦσαν ἀπ' 10  
 αὐτῶν περιουσίαν τῆς θείας δόσεως· ὥς δὲ αὐτοὶ ταῦτα δρῶσι προσε-  
 χῶς ἐφαπτόμενοι τῶν τοῦ ἀνθρωπίνου βίου πράξεων, οὐδενὶ συγχωρητέον  
 λέγειν. Μεριστὴ τε γάρ ἐστιν ἡ τοιαύτη προστασία τῶν τῆδε, καὶ μετὰ  
 τινος ἐπιστροφῆς ἐπιτελεῖται, χωριστὴ τε οὐκ ἔστι πάντη σωμάτων, καὶ  
 οὐ δύναται δέξασθαι τὴν καθαρὰν καὶ ἄχραντον ἐπιστάσιαν. Οὐκοῦν καὶ 15  
 [223] τρόπος ἱεροουργίας ἐπὶ τῶν τοιούτων ἔργων ὁ | συμμιγῆς πρὸς τὰ σώμα- 1  
 τα καὶ τῆς γενέσεως ἐχόμενος ἀρμόζει, οὐχ ὅστις ἐστὶν ἄνθρωπος παντελῶς  
 καὶ ἀσώματος. Ὁ μὲν γὰρ καθαρὸς ὑπερέχεται παντελῶς καὶ ἔστιν ἀσύμ-  
 μετρος, ὁ δὲ τοῖς σώμασι προσχρώμενος καὶ ταῖς διὰ τῶν σωμάτων δυ-  
 νάμεσι, πάντων μάλιστα ἐστὶ συγγενέστατος, δυνατὸς μὲν ἐμποιεῖν τινὰς 5

[221].11 τῆς M: om. V || 15 χρώμεθα V: χρώμενοι M || [222].6  
 ἐχομένων VM: ἐχόμενον cj. Gale || 9 αὐτοὺς V: ἑαυτοὺς M || [223].1  
 συμμιγῆς V: συμμιγείς M

itself, through bodies, in fact, that a body is nourished and purified. The procedure of sacrifices for such a purpose will be, then, necessarily corporeal, on the one hand cutting away what is superfluous within us and completing what is lacking in us, while on the other bringing into symmetry and order those elements that are disordered and confused. And then, very often, we have recourse to sacred rites in seeking to obtain from the higher powers the necessities of human life, that is to say, those things that provide care for the body, or secure those things that we seek to acquire for the body's sake.

17 What benefits, after all, could we expect to derive from gods who are totally exempt from all human generation in matters concerning crop failure or sterility or the securing of abundance or any other of the needs of daily life? None at all, surely. For those who are freed from all such concerns do not have the capacity for concerning themselves with such gifts. If, however, one were to say that the gods who are such as to concern themselves with these<sup>322</sup> are embraced by the completely immaterial gods, and that in embracing them they also embrace in themselves their gifts by virtue of a single primal causality, one could claim that there descends from them a certain superabundance of divine beneficence; but what no one may assert is that they do this themselves through any direct application to the activities of human life. For such supervision of human affairs is a particularised thing, and is performed with a certain degree of (downward) attention,<sup>323</sup> and it is not entirely separated from bodies, and it cannot receive pure and unsullied domination.<sup>324</sup> So then, for such operations a mode of cultic procedure is suitable that is involved with bodies and dependent upon generation, not one which is entirely immaterial and incorporeal. For the pure mode is totally transcendent, and lacks compatibility, while that which makes use of bodies and powers that operate through bodies is supremely compatible, being capable of introducing successful

<sup>322</sup> This must be the reference of τοὺς τοιοῦτους θεοὺς here.

<sup>323</sup> Again the use of ἐπιστροφή in the sense of relating to a lower entity; cf. our note to I.17.

<sup>324</sup> The reference of this last phrase is somewhat obscure—unless perhaps the true subject of δύνανται is σώματα, in which case the meaning is “and bodies cannot receive.” Such a change of subject would be peculiar, but might be made possible by the presence of σωμάτων just before.

εὐπραγίας εἰς τὸν βίον, δυνατὸς δὲ ἀποτρέπειν καὶ τὰς ἐνισταμένας δυσπραγίας, συμμετρίαν δὲ καὶ κοῤῥασιν τῷ θνητῷ γένει παρεχόμενος.

- 18 Κατ' ἄλλην τοίνυν διαίρεσιν ἡ πολλὴ μὲν ἀγέλη τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὑποτέτακται ὑπὸ τὴν φύσιν, φυσικαῖς τε δυνάμεσι διοικεῖται, καὶ κάτω πρὸς τὰ τῆς φύσεως ἔργα βλέπει, συμπληροῖ τε τῆς εἰμαρμένης 10 τὴν διοίκησιν, καὶ τῶν καθ' εἰμαρμένην ἐπιτελουμένων δέχεται τὴν τάξιν, πρακτικὸν τε λογισμὸν ἀεὶ ποιεῖται περὶ μόνων τῶν κατὰ φύσιν. Ὀλίγοι δέ τινες ὑπερφνεῖ δὴ τινι δυνάμει τοῦ νοῦ χρώμενοι, τῆς φύσεως μὲν ἀφιστάνονται, πρὸς δὲ τὸν χωριστὸν καὶ ἀμιγῆ νοῦν περιάγονται, οἵτινες ἅμα
- [224] καὶ | τῶν φυσικῶν δυνάμεων γίνονται κρείττονες. Ἐνιοὶ δὲ μεταξὺ τούτων 1 φέρονται περὶ τὰ μέσα τῆς φύσεώς τε καὶ τοῦ καθαροῦ νοῦ, οἱ μὲν ἀμφοτέρω ἐφεπόμενοι, οἱ δὲ συμμικτόν τινα ἀπ' αὐτῶν ζωὴν μετιόντες, οἱ δὲ ἀπολνόμενοι μὲν τῶν ὑποδεεστέρων ἐπὶ δὲ τὰ ἀμείνονα μεθιστάμενοι.
- Τούτων δὴ οὖν οὕτω διηρημένων, καὶ τὸ τοῖσδε ἐπόμενον εὐδὴλον 5 ἂν ὅτι μάλιστα γένοιτο. Οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐπιτροπευόμενοι κατὰ τὴν τῶν ὅλων φύσιν, καὶ αὐτοὶ κατὰ φύσιν τὴν οἰκείαν ἑαυτῶν ζῶντες δυνάμεσί τε τῆς φύσεως χρώμενοι, τὴν θρησκείαν ἐπιτηδεύουσι τῇ φύσει πρόσφορον καὶ τοῖς κινουμένοις ὑπὸ τῆς φύσεως σώμασι, τόπους τε καὶ ἀέρας καὶ ὕλην καὶ δυνάμεις τῆς ὕλης, καὶ σώματα καὶ τὰς περὶ τοῖς σώμασιν ἕξεις καὶ 10 ποιότητας, κινήσεις τε τὰς προσηκούσας καὶ μεταβολὰς τῶν ἐν γενέσει, καὶ ἄλλα τὰ ἐχόμενα τούτων ἐπιτηδεύοντες ἐν τε τοῖς ἄλλοις τῆς εὐσε-
- [225] βείας μορίοις καὶ δὴ καὶ ἐν τῷ θνηπολικῷ μέρει. | Οἱ δὲ κατὰ νοῦν μόνον 1

[223].8 κατ' ἄλλην (λα p. n., v s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: κατάλληλα VM || [224].3 ἀμφοτέρω cj. Westerink: ἀμφοτέρων codd. || 4 ἀμείνονα cj. i. m. Z<sup>3</sup>: ἀμυνόμενα VM || 12 τῆς V: τοῖς M

functioning into our life, and able also to avert such reverses as may arise, endowing the race of mortals with symmetry and integration.

**18** We may, however, employ another basis of division. The great mass of men, on the one hand, is subject to the domination of nature, and is ruled by natural forces, and directs its gaze downwards towards the works of nature, and fulfils the decrees of fate, and takes upon itself the order of what is brought about by fate, and always employs practical reasoning solely about natural phenomena.<sup>325</sup> A certain few individuals, on the other hand, employing an intellectual power which is beyond the natural, have disengaged themselves from nature, and turned towards the transcendent and pure intellect, at the same time rendering themselves superior to natural forces. There are some, finally, who conduct themselves in the middle area between nature and pure mind,<sup>326</sup> some following after each of them in turn, others pursuing a mode of life which is a blend of both, and others again who have freed themselves from the inferior level and are transferring their attention to the better.

On the basis of these distinctions, the consequence becomes exceedingly plain. Those who are governed by universal nature, and who themselves live according to their own proper natures and make use of the powers of nature, practise a mode of worship which is suited to nature and to those bodies which are moved by natural causes, paying due attention to particular localities and climatic conditions and matter and powers of matter, and bodies and the dispositions and qualities attendant on bodies, and motions and changes proper to things subject to generation, and to what depends upon these both in the other departments of worship and in the area of sacrifices. Those, on the other hand, who

<sup>325</sup> This rather Gnostic distinction between the mass of mortals and the few enlightened ones (the theurgists) is reflected in Iamblichus's *De anima* §28 Finamore-Dillon (ap. Stobaeus 1:379–380 Wachsmuth), in the distinction made between the general run of men and those pure souls that have descended for the enlightenment and salvation of their fellows.

<sup>326</sup> It is not quite clear why "Abamon" thinks it necessary to postulate this median class of people between the enlightened (theurgic) sages and the common herd (and then to make three further subdivisions within this median class). Is it perhaps to accommodate such non-theurgic philosophers as Porphyry?

καὶ τὴν τοῦ νοῦ ζωὴν τὸν βίον διάγοντες, τῶν δὲ τῆς φύσεως δεσμῶν ἀπο-  
 λυθέντες, νοερὸν καὶ ἀσώματον ἱερατικῆς θεσμὸν διαμελετῶσι περὶ πάντα  
 τῆς θεουργίας τὰ μέρη. Οἱ δὲ μέσοι τούτων κατὰ τὰς διαφορὰς τῆς μεταξὺ  
 μεσότητος καὶ τὰς ὁδοὺς τῆς ἀγιστείας διαφορῶς διαπονοῦσιν, ἥτοι με- 5  
 τέχοντες ἀμφοτέρων τῶν τρόπων τῆς θρησκείας, ἢ τοῦ μὲν ἀφιστάμενοι,  
 ἢ ὡς ὑπόθεσιν αὐτὰ λαμβάνοντες τῶν τιμιωτέρων (ἄνευ γὰρ αὐτῶν οὐκ  
 ἂν ποτε παραγένετο τὰ ὑπερέχοντα), ἢ ἄλλως οὕτως μεταχειριζόμενοι  
 αὐτὰ δεόντως.

19 Περὶ δὲ τὸν αὐτὸν τόπον κακείνη στρέφεται ἡ διαίρεσις· τῶν 10  
 θείων οὐσιῶν καὶ δυνάμεων αἱ μὲν ἔχουσι ψυχὴν καὶ φύσιν ὑποκειμένην  
 καὶ ὑπηρετοῦσαν αὐτῶν ταῖς δημιουργίαις, ἥπερ ἂν αὐταὶ βούλωνται, αἱ  
 δὲ πάντῃ ψυχῆς καὶ φύσεώς εἰσι χωρισταί, λέγω δὲ τῆς θείας ψυχῆς τε  
 καὶ φύσεως ἄλλ' οὐχὶ τῆς περικοσμίου τε καὶ γενεσιουργοῦ· τινὲς δὲ καὶ  
 μέσαι τούτων ὑπάρχουσιν κοινωνίαν αὐταῖς παρέχουσι πρὸς ἀλλήλας, ἢ 15  
 [226] κατὰ σύνδεσμον ἓνα ἀδιαίρετον, ἢ κατὰ μετάδοσιν τῶν μειζόνων ἄφθονον, 1  
 ἢ κατὰ ὑποδοχὴν τῶν ἐλαττόνων ἀκώλυτον, ἢ κατὰ σύνδετον ἀμφοῖν ὁμ-  
 ὄνοϊαν. Ὅταν μὲν οὖν θεοὺς θεραπεύωμεν τοὺς βασιλεύοντας ψυχῆς καὶ  
 φύσεως, οὐκ ἀλλότριον τούτοις ἐστὶ καὶ φυσικὰς δυνάμεις προσφέρειν,  
 σώματά τε τὰ διοικούμενα ὑπὸ τῆς φύσεως καθαρῶς αὐτοῖς οὐκ ἔστιν 5  
 ἀπόβλητον· ὅλα γὰρ τὰ τῆς φύσεως ἔργα ὑπηρετεῖ τε αὐτοῖς καὶ συντελεῖ  
 τι αὐτῶν εἰς τὴν διακόσμησιν. Ὅταν δὲ τοὺς αὐτοὺς καθ' ἑαυτοὺς μονοει-  
 δεῖς ὄντας τιμᾶν ἐπιχειρῶμεν, ἀπολύτοις τιμαῖς αὐτοὺς γεραίρειν ἄξιον·  
 τὰ δὲ νοερὰ τοῖς τοιούτοις δῶρα ἀρμόζει καὶ τὰ τῆς ἀσώματου ζωῆς, ὅσα  
 τε ἀρετὴ καὶ σοφία δωρεῖται, καὶ εἴ τινα τέλεια καὶ ὅλα τῆς ψυχῆς ἐσ- 10  
 τιν ἀγαθὰ. Καὶ μὴν τοῖς γε μέσοις καὶ τῶν μέσων ἡγεμονοῦσιν ἀγαθῶν  
 ἐνίοτε μὲν ἂν διπλᾶ δῶρα συναρμόσειεν, ἐνίοτε δ' ἂν ἐπίκοινα πρὸς ἀμφο-  
 τέρα ταῦτα, ἢ καὶ ἀποσχιζόμενα μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν κάτω πρὸς δὲ τὰ ὑψηλότερα

[225].5 διαφορῶς V: διαφόρως M || 10 τόπον VM: τρόπον cj. B: an  
 πόνον? || 12 βούλωνται scr. Parthey: βούλονται VM || 13 καὶ V: om. M ||  
 [226].2 ἀκώλυτον VM: γλαφυρόν (eadem manu) notat i. m. V || 12 ἂν διπλᾶ  
 V: διπλᾶ ἂν M

conduct their lives in accordance with intellect alone and the life according to intellect, and who have been freed from the bonds of nature, practise an intellectual and incorporeal rule of sacred procedure in respect of all the departments of theurgy. Those median between these pursue their work in accordance with the differences manifested within the median area and the different ways of worship proper to that, either participating in both modes of worship, or withdrawing themselves from the former type, or accepting them as a basis for proceeding towards the more noble type (for without these the superior type could not be attained to), or employing the sacred rites in some other such suitable way.

**19** It is on the same basis<sup>327</sup> that one may make also the following division. Of the divine essences and powers, some possess a soul and a nature subject and subservient to their creations, according to their own wills; others are entirely distinct from soul and nature (by which I mean divine soul and nature, not those which are encosmic and generative); some others again, median between these, provide a means for these to establish relations with each other, either by means of a single indivisible bond, or by reason of the ungrudging generosity of the superior powers, or through the unimpeded receptivity of the inferior, or through a concord which binds both together. When, then, we offer cult to the gods who rule over soul and nature, it is not inappropriate to these to offer them natural forces, and it is not derogatory to sacrifice to them bodies subject to the direction of nature; for all the works of nature serve them and contribute something to their administration. But when we set out to honour those gods that are in and of themselves uniform, it is proper to accord them honours that transcend matter; for to these are appropriate gifts which are intellectual and proper to incorporeal life, such as are conferred by virtue and wisdom, and any perfect and complete goods of the soul. And further, the intermediate entities, which administer median goods, will sometimes be suitably served by a double set of gifts, sometimes by gifts common to both levels, or again by gifts that signal a breaking-away from the lower and an

<sup>327</sup> τóπον here has occasioned some disquiet among editors; the scribe of B proposed τρόπον, and Des Places suggests πόλον, but this seems unnecessary.

ἀνήκοντα, ἣ πάντως ἐνί γε τῶν τρόπων συμπληροῦντα τὴν μεσότητα.

[227] | 20 Ἀπ' ἄλλης τοίνυν ἀρχῆς ὁρμώμενοι τοῦ τε κόσμου καὶ 1  
τῶν ἐγκοσμίων θεῶν, τῆς τε ἐν αὐτῷ τῶν τεττάρων στοιχείων διανομῆς,  
καὶ τῆς κατὰ τὰ μέτρα τῶν στοιχείων συλλήξεως, καὶ τῆς ἐν τάξει περὶ  
τοῖς κέντροις περιδινουμένης περιφορᾶς, εὐβατον ἔχομεν ἄνοδον ἐπὶ τὴν  
ἀλήθειαν τῆς περὶ θυσιῶν ἀγιστείας· εἰ γὰρ αὐτοὶ τέ ἐσμεν ἐν κόσμῳ 5  
καὶ ὡς μέρη περιεχόμεθα ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ παντί, παραγόμεθά τε ὑπ' αὐτοῦ  
πρώτως, καὶ τελειούμεθα ἀπὸ τῶν ὅλων ἐν αὐτῷ δυνάμεων, ἀπὸ τε τῶν  
ἐν αὐτῷ στοιχείων συνεστήκαμεν, καὶ μοῖρᾶν τινα ζωῆς καὶ φύσεως παρ'  
αὐτοῦ λαβόντες ἔχομεν, οὐ δεῖ δὴ διὰ ταῦτα ὑπερβαίνειν τὸν κόσμον καὶ  
τὰς ἐγκοσμίους διατάξεις. 10

Θῶμεν οὖν καθ' ἐκάστην περικόσμιον μερίδα εἶναι μὲν τι καὶ σῶ-  
μα τοῦτο ὅπερ ὁρῶμεν, εἶναι καὶ τὰς περὶ τοῖς σώμασι μεριστὰς δυνάμεις  
ἄσωμάτων· ὁ δὲ τῆς θρησκείας νόμος τὰ ὅμοια δηλονότι τοῖς ὁμοίοις  
ἀπονέμει, καὶ διατείνει δι' ὅλων οὕτως ἄνωθεν ἄχρι τῶν ἐσχάτων, ἄσω-  
[228] ματα μὲν ἄσωμάτοις, σώματα δὲ σώμασι, τὰ | σύμμετρα κατὰ τὴν ἐαυτῶν 1  
φύσιν ἐκατέροις ἀποδιδούς. Ἀλλὰ μὴν ὁπότε γέ τις τῶν θεουργικῶν θεῶν  
ὑπερκοσμίως μετέσχοι (τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶ τὸ πάντων σπανιώτατον), ἐκεῖ-  
νος δῆπουθὲν ἐστὶν ὁ καὶ σωμάτων καὶ ὕλης ὑπερέχων ἐπὶ θεραπείᾳ τῶν  
θεῶν, ὑπερκοσμίῳ τε δυνάμει τοῖς θεοῖς ἐνούμενος. Οὐ δεῖ δὴ τὸ ἐν ἐνί 5

[226].14 τῶν τρόπων VMW: τῶν τρόπων (τω et ω s. v.) cj. W<sup>r</sup> || [227].4  
περιδινουμένης M: περιδινουμένης V || 5 τέ VM: γέ cj. B || 11 μὲν τι V:  
μέντοι M || [228].3 ὑπερκοσμίως M: ὑπερκοσμίων V || 4 δῆπουθὲν VM:  
δῆπουθὲν cj. B || 5 τὸ ἐν (ἐ add. s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: τὸν VM

accession to the higher, or at any rate those that fulfil<sup>328</sup> this median role in one way or another.

20 If we take our start, however, from another angle, that is, the consideration of the cosmos and the encosmic gods, and the disposition of the four elements within it, and the apportionment of the elements in due measure, and the revolution which turns in order around the centre, we will find ourselves with a ready mode of access to the true principles on which the performance of sacrificial rites should be based. For if, in fact, we are ourselves indigenous to the cosmos and are comprehended within it as parts of a whole, and owe our existence in the first instance to it, and are brought to completion by the totality of the forces in it, and are put together out of the elements within it, and receive from it whatever share of life and nature we possess, these constitute reasons why we should not reckon on going beyond the cosmos and the dispositions proper to it.

Let us posit, then, that for each part of the cosmos there is on the one hand this body that we can see, and on the other hand the various particular incorporeal forces associated with bodies. Now the rule of cult, obviously, assigns like to like, and extends this principle from the highest to the lowest levels, incorporeal entities to incorporeal, and bodies to bodies, apportioning to each what is conformable to its own nature.<sup>329</sup> However, when one makes contact in a hypercosmic mode with the gods of theurgy (which is an exceedingly rare occurrence), such an individual will be one who has transcended the bounds of bodies and matter in the service of the gods, and who is united to the gods through hypercosmic

<sup>328</sup> As Des Places points out ad loc., συμπληροῦντα recalls Plato's description of the role of daemons in the famous passage of the *Symposium* 206e. There is no suggestion, however, that these median entities are envisaged as daemons. They rather seem to be a class of gods intermediate between the fully transcendent, or hypercosmic, and the encosmic gods.

<sup>329</sup> This rule of "like to like" goes back, of course, very far in Greek thought (for a good statement of the principle, together with an attribution of it to Homer, cf. Plato, *Lysis* 214a–b), but in the context of theurgic practice it refers to the identification of particular natural substances with definite parts or levels of the cosmos, and the spiritual entities inhabiting them. For further hints at this fundamental doctrine see *Myst.* I.5.16; I.6.20; I.15.49; V.10.211; see also Proclus, *ET* prop. 28–35 for perhaps the fullest explanation; Saloustios (= Sallustius), *De dis* 16.2.4–8 employs the principle in his case for the necessity of sacrifice.



ποτε μόλις καὶ ὅψε παραγιγνόμενον ἐπὶ τῷ τέλει τῆς ἱερατικῆς τοῦτο κοι-  
νὸν ἀποφαίνειν πρὸς ἅπαντας ἀνθρώπους, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ πρὸς τοὺς ἀρχομένους  
τῆς θεουργίας ποιεῖσθαι αὐτόχρημα κοινόν, οὐδὲ πρὸς τοὺς μεσοῦντας ἐν  
αὐτῇ· καὶ γὰρ οὗτοι ἀμωσγέπως σωματοειδῇ ποιοῦνται τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν  
τῆς ὁσιότητος.

10

**21** Οἶμαι τοίνυν καὶ τοῦτο ἂν προσομολογήσαι πάντας τοὺς φι-  
λοθεάμονας τῆς θεουργικῆς ἀληθείας, ὡς οὐκ ἐκ μέρους χρηὶ οὐδὲ ἀτελῶς  
συνυφαίνειν τοῖς θεοῖς τὴν ἐπιβάλλουσαν αὐτοῖς εὐσέβειαν. Ἐπειδὴ τοί-  
νυν πρὸ τῆς παρουσίας τῶν θεῶν προκινουῦνται πᾶσαι δυνάμεις ὅσαι αὐτοῖς  
προϋπόκεινται, καὶ ὅταν μέλλωσι κινεῖσθαι ἐπὶ γῆν προηγοῦνται αὐτῶν 15  
[229] καὶ προπομπεύουσιν, ὁ μὲν μὴ ἀπονείμας πᾶσι | τὸ πρόσφορον καὶ κατὰ 1  
τὴν ἐπιβάλλουσαν τιμὴν ἕκαστον δεξιωσάμενος, ἀτελὴς ἀπέρχεται καὶ  
ἄμοιρος τῆς μετουσίας τῶν θεῶν, ὁ δὲ πάντα τε ἰλεωσάμενος καὶ ἐκάστῳ  
τὰ κεχαρισμένα καὶ κατὰ δύναμιν ὁμοιότατα γέρα προσενεγκών, ἀσφα-  
λῆς καὶ ἄπταιστος αἰεὶ διαμένει, τέλεον καὶ ὁλόκληρον τὴν ὑποδοχὴν τοῦ 5  
θεοῦ χοροῦ καλῶς ἀποπληρώσας. Ὅποτε δὴ οὖν τοῦτο οὕτως ἔχει, πό-  
τερον ἀπλοῦν καὶ ἐξ ὀλίγων δὴ τινων συνιστάμενον τὸν τρόπον εἶναι δεῖ  
τῆς ἁγιστείας, ἢ πολύτροπον καὶ παναρμόνιον καὶ ἀπὸ πάντων, ὡς ἔπος  
εἰπεῖν, τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ συγκεκροτημένον;

Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἀπλοῦν τι καὶ μιᾶς τάξεως τὸ παρακαλούμενον καὶ κι- 10  
νούμενον ἦν ἐν ταῖς ἁγιστείαις, ἀπλοῦς ἂν ἦν καὶ τῶν θυσιῶν ἐξ ἀνάγκης  
ὁ τρόπος· εἰ δὲ τῶν μὲν ἄλλων οὐδενὶ περιληπτόν, ὅσον ἐγείρεται πλῆθος  
δυνάμεων ἐν τῷ κατιέναι καὶ κινεῖσθαι τοὺς θεοὺς, μόνοι δὲ οἱ θεουργοὶ  
[230] ταῦτα ἐπὶ τῶν ἔργων πειραθέντες ἀκριβῶς | γιγνώσκουσι, μόνοι οὗτοι 1  
καὶ δύνανται γιγνώσκειν τίς ἐστὶν ἡ τελεσιουργία τῆς ἱερατικῆς, καὶ τὰ  
παραλειπόμενα ἴσασι, κἂν βραχέα ᾗ, ὅτι τὸ ὅλον τῆς θρησκείας ἔργον  
ἀνατρέπει, ὥσπερ ἐν ἁρμονίᾳ μιᾶς χορδῆς ῥαγείσης ἡ ὅλη ἀνάρμοστός  
τε καὶ ἀσύμμετρος γίγνεται· ὥσπερ οὖν ἐπὶ τῶν φανερῶν θείων καθόδων 5

[228].6 ὅψε M: ὁ.. V (lac. 2 ll.) || 14 αὐτοῖς scripsi: αὐταῖς VM ||  
15 προϋπόκεινται VM: ὑπόκεινται cj. F || [229].5 καὶ M: om. V || 9  
συγκεκροτημένον VM: συγκεκροτημένων cj. (νων i. m.) B<sup>2</sup> || 10 τάξεως (καὶ  
p. n.) V<sup>2</sup>: τάξεως καὶ VM || 11 ἀπλοῦς M et (o vel fort. ou s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: ἀπλῶς  
V | ἂν V: om. M || [230].3 παραλειπόμενα cj. Gale: περιλειπόμενα VM

power. One should not therefore take a feature that manifests itself in the case of a particular individual, as the result of great effort and long preparation, at the consummation of the hieratic art, and present it as something common to all men, but not even as something immediately available to those beginning theurgy, nor yet those who have reached a middling degree of proficiency in it; for even these latter endow their performance of cult with some degree of corporeal influence.

**21** This fact also, I imagine, will be recognised by all those who love to contemplate<sup>330</sup> theurgic truth, that one should not connect the gods up with the cult pertaining to them in any partial or incomplete way. Since, then, prior to the appearance of the gods, all the powers subject to them are set in motion, and, when they are about to proceed to earth, go ahead of them and escort them, anyone who fails to allot to all their due and welcome each of them with suitable honour will end up unsatisfied and deprived of any share in communication with the gods, whereas he, on the other hand, who has propitiated all, and rendered to each the gifts that are pleasing and to the greatest extent possible conformable to them, remains always safe and free from mishap, having nobly performed, in perfection and integrity, the reception of the whole divine choir.<sup>331</sup> Since this is the case, therefore, must the mode of the ceremony be simple, consisting of a few essentials, or must it be multiform and panharmonic, and composed, so to speak, out of everything contained in the world?

Well, if that which is evoked and set in motion in sacred rites were simple and of one order of being, then necessarily the mode of sacrifice would be simple also. But if, in fact, the multitude of powers stirred up in the process of the arousal and descent of the gods is such as no one else can comprehend, but only the theurgists know these things exactly through having made trial of them in practice, then only these can know what is the proper method of performing the hieratic art, and they realise that any elements omitted, even minor ones, can subvert the whole performance of cult, even as in the playing of a musical scale the breaking of a single string destroys the harmony and symmetry of the whole.

<sup>330</sup> Cf. III.21.172.8-9 and our note ad loc.

<sup>331</sup> Θεῖος χορός is a Platonic expression for the whole spectrum of divine beings, derived from Plat. *Phaedr.* 247a.

ἐναργῆς ἢ βλάβη γίνεται τοῖς ἀτίμητόν τινα τῶν κρειττόνων παραλιποῦ-  
 σιν, οὕτω καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς ἀφανοῦς αὐτῶν παρουσίας ἐν ταῖς θυσίαις οὐ τὸν  
 μὲν τὸν δ' οὐ, πάνν δὲ τιμητέον καθ' ἣν ἕκαστος εἴληχε τάξιν. Ὁ δὲ ἀγέ-  
 ραστόν τινα ἀφείς συνέχευε τὸ ὄλον καὶ τὴν μίαν καὶ ὅλην διακόσμησιν  
 διέσπασεν· οὐχ ὥς ἂν τις οὖν νομίσειεν, ἀτελῇ τὴν ὑποδοχὴν ἐποίησατο, 10  
 ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ παράπαν τὴν ὅλην ἀνέστρεψεν ἀγιστεῖαν.

**22** Τί δέ; οὐχὶ τὸ ἀκρότατον τῆς ἱερατικῆς ἐπ' αὐτὸ τὸ κυριώτα-  
 τον τοῦ ὄλου πλήθους ἐν ἀνατρέχει, καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ ἅμα τὰς πολλὰς οὐσίας  
 καὶ ἀρχὰς συνθεραπεύει; καὶ πάνν γε, φήσαιμ' ἂν· ἀλλὰ τοῦτο ὀψιαιάτα  
 [231] παραγίγνε|ται καὶ τοῖς σφόδρα ὀλιγιστοῖς, καὶ ἀγαπητόν εἰ καὶ ἐν δυσ- 1  
 μαῖς τοῦ βίου ποτὲ ὑπάρξειεν. Ἄλλ' ὁ νῦν λόγος οὐ τῷ τοιούτῳ ἀνδρὶ  
 διαθεσμοθετεῖ (κρείττων γάρ ἐστι παντὸς νόμου), τοῖς δὲ δεομένοις θε-  
 σμοῦ τινος προσάγει τὴν τοιαύτην νομοθεσίαν. Λέγει τοίνυν ὅτι καθάπερ  
 κόσμον τινὰ ἐκ πολλῶν τάξεων εἰς μίαν συνιόντα σύνταξιν, οὕτω καὶ τῶν 5  
 θυσιῶν δεῖ τὴν συμπλήρωσιν, ἀνέκλειπτον οὖσαν καὶ ὁλόκληρον, ὅλῳ τῷ  
 διακόσμῳ τῶν κρειττόνων συνάπτεσθαι. Ἀλλὰ μὴν οὗτος εἴ γε πολὺς ἐσ-  
 τι καὶ παντελὴς καὶ κατὰ πολλὰς τάξεις συμφυρόμενος, δεῖ τοίνυν καὶ τὴν  
 ἱεροουργίαν μιμεῖσθαι αὐτοῦ τὸ παντοδαπὸν δι' ὅλων τῶν προσαγομένων  
 δυνάμεων. Κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ τοίνυν καὶ τὰ περὶ ἡμᾶς παντοδαπὰ ὄντα οὐ χρη 10  
 ἐκ μέρους τινὸς τῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς συνυφαίνεσθαι πρὸς τὰ προηγούμενα αὐτῶν  
 θεῖα αἷτια, ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ἀτελῶς πρὸς τοὺς ἀρχηγέτας αὐτῶν ἀνήκειν.  
 [232] | **23** Ὁ τοίνυν ποικίλος τρόπος τῆς ἐν ταῖς ἱεροουργίαις ἀγι- 1  
 στείας τὰ μὲν ἀποκαθαίρει, τὰ δὲ τελειοῖ τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν ἢ περὶ ἡμᾶς ὄντων,

[230].6-7 παραλιποῦσιν scripsi: περιλιποῦσιν V περιλειποῦσιν M || 8  
 πάνν] an πάντας? || 14 γε V: om. M || [231].5 σύνταξιν] σύναξιν cj. F ||  
 11 αὐτοῖς V: αὐταῖς M

So then, even as in the case of visible divine descents the harm done by those who leave any of the higher beings without honour is manifest, so in the case of their invisible presence at sacrifices one must not honour one without another, but each one without exception, according to the rank which they have been allotted. He who leaves any without its share of honour subverts the whole, and wrenches asunder the unity of the total system; it is not a case, as one might think, of providing an imperfect reception, but of the absolute subversion of the whole rite.

**22** But come now, you say, is it not the highest purpose of the hieratic art to ascend to the One, which is supreme master of the whole multiplicity (of divinities),<sup>332</sup> and in concert with that, at the same time, to pay court to all the other essences and principles? Indeed it is, I would reply; but that does not come about except at a very late stage and to very few individuals, and one must be satisfied if it occurs even in the twilight of one's life.<sup>333</sup> But the purpose of the present discourse is not to prescribe precepts for such a man (for he is superior to all legislation), but to provide a set of rules for those who need regulation. Our prescription, then, declares that, even as an ordering structure unites various classes of entity into one system, so should the performance of sacrifices, if it is to be complete and without deficiency, join together the whole class of higher beings. But if this class is in fact vast and complete and ramified on many levels, it is necessary that sacred cult represent its variety by paying due reverence to all its attendant powers.<sup>334</sup> In the same way, then, the various things at our level should not be linked together, on the basis of one part only of what is proper to them, to the divine causes which preside over them, but should ascend in their entirety to their leaders.<sup>335</sup>

**23** So then, the varied mode of cult in theurgic rites purifies some things, and brings others to perfection, of what is

<sup>332</sup> Presumably that is what is meant here, not multiplicity in general. This is, incidentally, a useful statement of the purpose of theurgy, which is ascent to the One, even as is that of theoretical philosophy.

<sup>333</sup> For the phrase ἐν δυσμαΐς τοῦ βίου, see Plato, *Leg.* 6.770a7.

<sup>334</sup> Presumably a reference to the powers mentioned at the beginning of V.21.

<sup>335</sup> It is not quite clear to what τὰ περὶ ἡμῶς παντοδαπὰ ὄντα refers, but it may be a reference to the various parts and organs of our bodies, which are to be linked to the various spiritual forces which preside over these.

τὰ δὲ εἰς συμμετρίαν καὶ τάξιν καθίστησι, τὰ δὲ ἄλλως ἀπολύει τῆς θνητοειδοῦς πλημμελείας, πάντα δὲ προσήγορα τοῖς ὅλοις κρείττωσιν ἡμῶν ἀπεργάζεται. Καὶ μὴν συνιόντων γε εἰς τὸ αὐτὸ τῶν θεῶν αἰτίων καὶ τῶν 5 ἀνθρωπίνων παραπλησίων αὐτοῖς παρασκευῶν, πάντα τελεῖ καὶ μεγάλα ἀγαθὰ τῆς θυσίας ἢ τελεσιουργία παρέχεται.

Οὐδὲν χεῖρον δέ τι καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα προσθεῖναι πρὸς ἀκριβῆ περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν κατανόησιν. Πέφυκεν ἅει τῶν ἀκροτάτων ἢ περιουσία τῆς δυνάμεως καὶ ἐν τῷδε ὑπερέχειν τῶν ὅλων, ἐν τῷ παρεῖναι πᾶσιν ἐξ ἴσου τὴν 10 αὐτὴν ἀνεμποδίστως· ἐλλάμπει τοίνυν κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν λόγον καὶ τοῖς ἐσχάτοις τὰ πρῶτιστα, καὶ πάρεστιν ἀύλως τοῖς ἐνύλοις τὰ ἄνυλα. Μὴ δὴ τις θαυμάζετω ἐὰν καὶ ὕλην τινὰ καθαρὰν καὶ θεῖαν εἶναι λέγωμεν· ἀπὸ γὰρ [233] τοῦ πατρὸς καὶ δημιουργοῦ τῶν ὅλων καὶ αὕτη γενομένη, τὴν | τελειότητα 1 ἐαυτῆς ἐπιτηδεῖαν κέκτηται πρὸς θεῶν ὑποδοχὴν. Καὶ ἅμα οὐδὲν διείργει τὰ κρείττονα πρὸς τὸ δύνασθαι τὰ καταδεέστερα ἐαυτῶν ἐλλάμπειν, οὐδὲ τὴν ὕλην οὐδὲν ἀφίστησιν οὐδὲν τῆς τῶν βελτιόνων μετουσίας, ὥστε ὅση τελεία καὶ καθαρὰ καὶ ἀγαθοειδὴς ὑπάρχει πρὸς θεῶν ὑποδοχὴν ἐστὶν οὐκ 5 ἀνάρμοστος· ἐπεὶ γὰρ ἔδει καὶ τὰ ἐν γῇ μηδαμῶς εἶναι ἄμοιρα τῆς θείας κοινωνίας, ἐδέξατό τινα ἀπ' αὐτῆς θεῖαν μοῖραν καὶ ἡ γῆ, ἱκανὴν οὖσαν χωρῆσαι τοὺς θεούς.

[232].6 τελεῖ V: τέλεια M || 8 τι VM: τοι cj. B || [233].4 οὐδὲν cj. Parthey: οὐδὲ VM || 7 ἀπ' VM: ἐπ' (ἐ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>

inherent in us or otherwise connected with us, while others, again, it brings to symmetry and order, and others it frees from mortal error, and renders all of them conformable to all the beings superior to us. So it is as a consequence of the conjunction of divine causal agencies and of mortal preparations aligning themselves with those that the performance of sacrifice achieves its end, and confers its great benefits.<sup>336</sup>

There is no harm, at this point, in adding certain further points, in order to clarify our understanding of these matters. In the highest level of beings, the abundance of power has this additional advantage over all others, in being present to all equally in the same manner without hindrance; according to this principle, then, the primary beings illuminate even the lowest levels, and the immaterial are present immaterially to the material.<sup>337</sup> And let there be no astonishment if in this connection we speak of a pure and divine form of matter; for matter also issues from the father and creator of all,<sup>338</sup> and thus gains its perfection, which is suitable to the reception of gods. And, at the same time, nothing hinders the superior beings from being able to illuminate their inferiors, nor yet, by consequence, is matter excluded from participation in its betters, so that such of it as is perfect and pure and of good type is not unfitted to receive the gods; for since it was proper not even for terrestrial things to be utterly deprived of participation in the divine, earth also has received from it<sup>339</sup> a share in divinity, such as is sufficient for it to be able to receive the gods.

<sup>336</sup> For this thought, cf. Plato, *Leg.* 7.809d–e.

<sup>337</sup> This is the principle attributed to Iamblichus by Olympiodorus in his commentary on the *Alcibiades* 110.13 (= Iamblichus, *Comm. Alc.* frg. 8 Dillon), according to which (in opposition to the position later enunciated by Proclus in *ET* prop. 57), “irrespective of that point at which a principle begins to operate, it does not cease its operation before extending to the lowest level.” It is of obvious importance to a doctrine of the efficacy of theurgic practices.

<sup>338</sup> This most significant Platonic expression is taken verbally from *Tim.* 41a7 and *Pol.* 273b1, but substantially also from *Tim.* 28c3–4 and 37c7. The question is, to whom, in Iamblichus’s theological system, does it refer? Presumably the One, rather than just Intellect, since his point is that matter itself derives from the highest principle.

<sup>339</sup> To what does ἀντῆς refer? Grammatically, the nearest noun is κοινω-νία, so that we might understand something like “the divine dispensation.” It can hardly refer to matter.

Ταῦτα τοίνυν κατιδοῦσα ἡ θεωρηγική τέχνη, κοινῶς τε οὕτως κατ' οἰκειότητα ἐκάστῳ τῶν θεῶν τὰς προσφόρους ὑποδοχὰς ἀνευρίσκουσα, 10 συμπλέκει πολλάκις λίθους βοτάνας ζῶα ἀρώματα ἄλλα τοιαῦτα ἱερὰ καὶ τέλεια καὶ θεοειδῆ, κᾶπειτα ἀπὸ πάντων τούτων ὑποδοχὴν ὀλοτελῆ καὶ καθαρὰν ἀπεργάζεται.

[234] Οὐ γὰρ δὴ δεῖ δυσχεραίνειν πᾶσαν ὕλην, ἀλλὰ μόνην | τὴν ἄλλο- 1  
τρίαν τῶν θεῶν, τὴν δὲ οἰκειάν πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἐκλέγεσθαι, ὥς συμφωνεῖν  
δυναμένην εἰς τε θεῶν οἰκοδομήσεις καὶ καθιδρύσεις ἀγαλμάτων καὶ δὴ  
καὶ εἰς τὰς τῶν θυσιῶν ἱερουργίας. Οὐδὲ γὰρ ἂν ἄλλως τοῖς ἐπὶ γῆς τό-  
ποις ἢ τοῖς δεῦρο κατοικοῦσιν ἀνθρώποις μετουσία ἂν γένοιτο τῆς τῶν 5  
κρειττόνων λήψεως, εἰ μὴ τις τοιαύτη καταβολὴ πρώτη προενιδρυθείη·  
περίθεςθαι δὲ χρὴ τοῖς ἀπορρήτοις λόγοις ὥς καὶ διὰ τῶν μακαρίων θεα-  
μάτων ὕλη τις ἐκ θεῶν παραδίδοται· αὕτη δὲ που συμφυῆς ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς  
ἐκείνοις τοῖς διδοῦσιν· οὐκοῦν καὶ ἡ τῆς τοιαύτης ὕλης θυσία ἀνεγείρει

[233].10 προσφόρους M: προσφορὰς V || 11 ἄλλα VM: ἄλλα τε (τε i. m.) V<sup>2</sup> || [234].6 λήψεως ] an λήξεως? || 8 δέ που VM: δήπου cj. Gale

Observing this, and discovering in general, in accordance with the properties of each of the gods, the receptacles adapted to them, the theurgic art in many cases links together stones, plants, animals, aromatic substances, and other such things that are sacred, perfect and godlike, and then from all these composes an integrated and pure receptacle.<sup>340</sup>

One must not, after all, reject all matter, but only that which is alien to the gods, while selecting for use that which is akin to them, as being capable of harmonising with the construction of dwellings for the gods, the consecration of statues,<sup>341</sup> and indeed for the performance of sacrificial rites in general. For there is no other way in which the terrestrial realm or the men who dwell here could enjoy participation in the existence that is the lot<sup>342</sup> of the higher beings, if some such foundation be not laid down in advance. We must, after all, give credit to the secret discourses<sup>343</sup> when they tell us how a sort of matter is imparted by the gods in the course of blessed visions;<sup>344</sup> this is presumably of like nature with those who bestow it. So the sacrifice of such material

<sup>340</sup> This is a good statement of the rationale behind the composition of the substances used in magical spells, as illustrated repeatedly in the magical papyri.

<sup>341</sup> A recognised theurgical practice, sometimes gaining a tangible response from the statue. Julian's spiritual master, Maximus of Ephesus, a pupil of a pupil of Iamblichus, was especially adept at this; see Eunapius, *Vit. soph.* 474–475. Maximus was regarded as something of a charlatan due to his flashy theurgic routines, but much admired by the emperor Julian for the self-same reason.

<sup>342</sup> Reading *λήξεως* here for *λήψεως* of the MSS in accordance with the suggestion of Des Places. The manuscript reading makes some sense, but it is really redundant after *μετουσία*.

<sup>343</sup> Presumably those secret books of Hermes about which we will hear more in VIII.1. Cf. also the remarks on the production of matter by God in VIII.3.265.

<sup>344</sup> For example, *PGM* I. 1–42, a conjuration of a *πάρεδρος δαίμων*, in the course of which a falcon brings an oblong stone which is plainly of supernatural origin.



τοὺς θεοὺς ἐπὶ τὴν ἔκφασιν, καὶ προσκαλεῖται εὐθέως πρὸς κατάληψιν, 10  
χωρεῖ τε αὐτοὺς παραγιγνομένους καὶ τελείως ἐπιδείκνυνσι.

24 Τὰ δ' αὐτὰ ἄν τις καταμάθῃ καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς κατὰ τόπους δια-  
νομῆς καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς μεριστῆς ἐφ' ἑκάστῳ τῶν ὄντων ἐπιστασίας, ὅση κατὰ  
διαφόρους τάξεις ἢ μείζονας ἢ ἐλάττονας τὰς λήξεις ταύτας κατενεύμα-  
[235] το· δηλὸν γὰρ δήπου τοῦθ', ὅτι τοῖς ἐπιβεβηκόσι τινῶν τόπων θεοῖς | τὰ 1  
ἀπ' αὐτῶν γεννώμενα προσάγεσθαι εἰς θυσίαν ἐστὶν οἰκειότατα, καὶ τοῖς  
διοικοῦσι τὰ τῶν διοικουμένων· ἀεὶ μὲν γὰρ τοῖς ποιοῦσι τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἔργα  
διαφερόντως ἐστὶ κεχαρισμένα, τοῖς δὲ πρώτως τινὰ παράγουσι καὶ πρώ-  
τως ἐστὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα προσφιλεῖ· εἴτε οὖν ζῶα τινὰ εἴτε φυτὰ εἴτε ἄλλα τῶν 5  
ἐπὶ γῆς διακυβερνᾶται ἀπὸ τῶν κρείττονων, ὁμοῦ τῆς ἐπιστασίας αὐτῶν  
μετείληχε καὶ τὴν κοινωνίαν ἡμῖν προξενεῖ πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἀδιαίρετον. Ἐνια  
μὲν οὖν τῶν τοιούτων, σωζόμενα αὐτὰ καὶ τηρούμενα, τῶν συνεχόντων  
συναύξει τὴν πρὸς θεοὺς οἰκείωσιν, ὅσα τῷ μένειν ἀκέραια τὴν δύναμιν  
τῆς κοινωνίας θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων διασώζει. Τοιαῦτα δ' ἐστὶν ἔνια τῶν 10  
ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ ζώων, καὶ οἷος ὁ ἱερός ἄνθρωπος πανταχοῦ ὑπάρχει. Ἐνια δὲ  
καθαγιαζόμενα λαμπροτέραν ποιεῖ τὴν οἰκειότητα, ὅσα τὴν ἀνάλυσιν ἐπὶ  
τὴν τῶν πρώτων στοιχείων ἀρχὴν συγγενῇ ποιεῖται τοῖς τῶν κρείττονων  
αἰτίοις καὶ ἱεροπρεπεστέραν· τελειομένης γὰρ ἀεὶ ταύτης τελειότερα καὶ  
τὰ ἀπ' αὐτῆς ἐνδιδόμενα ἀγαθὰ καθήκει. 15

[234].10 ἔκφασιν VM: ἔμφασιν cj. Gale: an ἔκφανσιν? || 13 ἑκάστῳ M:  
ἑκάστων V || [235].2 ἐστὶν M: om. V || 4 παράγουσι cj. Nock: προσάγουσι  
VM

rouses up the gods to manifestation,<sup>345</sup> summons them to reception, welcomes them when they appear, and ensures their perfect representation.<sup>346</sup>

**24** The same lesson may be learned also from the division (of divine influence) around the regions of the earth, and from the particular administration of each of the classes of being, such as has allotted the greater or lesser roles that now obtain to the various different orders. It is obvious, after all, that for those gods who preside over one region or another the products of those regions are the most suitable to bring to sacrifice—to the administrators the fruits of their administration; for in all cases their own creations are particularly pleasing to the creators, and to those who are the primary producers of something such things are dear to a primary extent. So whether it is a case of animals or plants or any other products of the earth that are administered by higher beings, they have no sooner received a share in their authority than they procure for us indivisible communion with them. Some among such things, when preserved and kept intact, serve to increase the kinship of those who preserve them with the gods—that is to say, those which, in remaining intact, preserve the power of community between gods and men. Such are certain of the animals in Egypt,<sup>347</sup> and such is the holy man<sup>348</sup> everywhere. Others, however, make the kinship more prominent through being sacrificed, these being those whose resolution into the first principle of their primary elements<sup>349</sup> makes them akin to the causal principles of the higher beings, and thus more honoured by them; for as this kinship is progressively brought to perfection, the benefits deriving from it become ever more perfect also.

<sup>345</sup> Accepting Des Places's suggestion of *ἐκφρασιν* for *ἐμφρασιν* of the MSS.

<sup>346</sup> Presumably this means that the use of proper material provides the gods with a suitable medium in which to manifest their characteristic natures.

<sup>347</sup> Has the persona of "Abamon" slipped again here? One would have expected him to say "some of the animals here," or "amongst us in Egypt."

<sup>348</sup> This may, as Des Places suggests *ad loc.*, be a reference to the figure of the scapegoat, but it may equally well (as Des Places also allows) refer to the phenomenon of the position of the holy man in late antiquity as a sort of link between his community and the divinity, as discussed by Brown (1971).

<sup>349</sup> That is, by being consumed by fire.

[236] | 25 *Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἀνθρώπινα ἔθῃ ταῦτα ἦν μόνον, καὶ διὰ τῶν 1*  
*ἡμετέρων νομίμων ἐπεκυροῦτο, εἶχεν ἄν τις λέγειν ἡμετέρων ἐννοιῶν εὐ-*  
*ρέσεις εἶναι τὰς τῶν θεῶν ἀγιστείας· νῦν δὲ θεός ἐστιν αὐτῶν ἡγεμὼν ὁ*  
*ἐπὶ θυσιῶν οὕτω καλούμενος, καὶ θεοὶ καὶ ἄγγελοι περὶ αὐτὸν παμπλη-*  
*θεῖς ὑπάρχουσιν· καθ' ἕκαστόν τε ἔθνος τῶν ἐπὶ γῆς διακεκλήρωται τις 5*  
*ὑπ' αὐτοῦ κοινὸς προστάτης, καὶ καθ' ἕκαστον ἱερὸν ὁ ἴδιος· καὶ τῶν μὲν*  
*πρὸς θεοὺς θυσιῶν ἔφορός ἐστι θεός, τῶν δὲ πρὸς ἀγγέλους ἄγγελος, τῶν*  
*δὲ πρὸς δαίμονας δαίμων, καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὡσαύτως ὁ κατὰ τὸ οἰκεῖον*  
*γένος συγγενῶς συγκεκλήρωται ἐφ' ἑκάστων. Ὅποτε δὴ οὖν μετὰ θεῶν*  
*ἐφόρων καὶ ἀποπληρωτῶν τῆς θνητολίας τὰς θυσίας προσάγομεν τοῖς 10*  
*θεοῖς, ὁμοῦ μὲν σέβειν δεῖ τὸν θεσμὸν τῆς ἐν ταῖς θυσίαις θείας ὁσίας,*  
*ὁμοῦ δὲ θαρρεῖν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς προσήκει (ὥς ὑπὸ θεοῖς ἄρχουσιν ἱερουργοῦ-*  
*μεν), ὁμοῦ δὲ καὶ τὴν ἀξίαν εὐλάβειαν ἔχειν, μὴ πῃ τῶν θεῶν ἀνάξιόν τι 1*  
 [237] *δῶ[ρον] προσαγάγωμεν ἢ ἀλλότριον· ἐπὶ τῷ τέλει δὲ κἀκεῖνο παραγγέλλο-*  
*μεν, στοχάζεσθαι πάντων τελέως τῶν περὶ ἡμᾶς, τῶν ἐν τῷ παντί, τῶν*  
*κατὰ γένη διωρισμένων θεῶν ἀγγέλων δαιμόνων, καὶ πρὸς πάντας ταύ-*  
*τη ὁμοίως προσφιλῇ τὴν θυσίαν δωρεῖσθαι· μόνως γὰρ ἂν οὕτως ἐπάξιος 5*  
*τῶν ἐφεστηκότων αὐτῆς θεῶν ἡ ἀγιστεία γένοιτο.*

[236].4 οὕτω καλούμενος M: οὕτως ἐπικαλούμενος V || 10 προσάγομεν V: προσαγάγομεν M || 12 ἑαυτοῖς cj. Gale: ἑαυτῆς VM || 13 ἔχειν V: ἔχει M || [237].1-2 παραγγέλλομεν scr. B: παραγγέλομεν VM || 3-4 ταύτη (η s. v.) cj. A<sup>r</sup>: ταῦτα VM

25 If all this were just a matter of human customs, and derived its validity merely from our conventions, there would be some justification for declaring that the cultic practices honouring the gods were discoveries arising from our conceptions; as it is, however, God<sup>350</sup> is the initiator of these things, he who is called “the god who presides over sacrifices,” and there is a great multitude of gods and angels in attendance upon him. Also, to each race upon the earth he has allotted a general supervisor,<sup>351</sup> and a particular one for each holy place;<sup>352</sup> and sacrifices that are directed towards a god have as their overseer a god, while those to angels have an angel, those to daemons a daemon, and in the case of all others likewise, whatever entity suitable to their proper class has been allotted to them. So when we perform our sacrifices to the gods with the backing of gods as supervisors and executives of the sacrificial procedure, we should on the one hand pay due reverence to the regulation of the sanctity of divine sacrifice, but on the other we may have due confidence in ourselves (on the assumption that we are celebrating the rites under the supervision of the gods), while at the same time observing the proper precautions against inadvertently offering to the gods a gift unworthy of, or alien to, them. Finally, we make this recommendation also, that one should make an accurate study of all the entities that surround us, those that inhabit the universe, the gods, angels and daemons assigned to the various nations, and to present one’s sacrifices to all in a manner agreeable to them in all cases; for only in this way will our ritual practice come to be worthy of the gods who preside over it.<sup>353</sup>

<sup>350</sup> It is not quite clear to which god “Abamon” intends to refer here. Probably Intellect rather than the One. However, he seemed to merit a capital letter.

<sup>351</sup> What is the status of this entity? “Abamon” may have in mind just the traditional patronage exercised by one or the other Olympian deity over one state or another, such as Athena over Athens, or Hera over Argos, extending this concept to include all other nations (e.g. Venus/Aphrodite over the Romans, or Dionysos, as Yahweh, over the Jews)—all these allotted their roles by the Demiurge.

<sup>352</sup> Or simply “temple,” but the more general term seemed most appropriate.

<sup>353</sup> Iamblichus seems to have made a contribution to this project, in the case of the gods of his native Syria at least, in a work used later by the Emperor Julian (*Hymn to King Helios* 150c–d), which may or may not have been part of

**26** Ἐπεὶ δὲ μέρος τῶν θυσιῶν οὐ τὸ σμικρότατόν ἐστι τὸ τῶν ἐρχῶν, συμπληροῖ τε αὐτὰς ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα, καὶ διὰ τούτων κρατύνεται αὐτῶν καὶ ἐπιτελεῖται τὸ πᾶν ἔργον, κοινήν τε συντέλειαν ποιεῖται πρὸς τὴν θρησκείαν, καὶ τὴν κοινωνίαν ἀδιάλυτον ἐμπλέκει τὴν ἱερατικὴν πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς, οὐ χειρόν καὶ περὶ ταύτης ὀλίγα διελθεῖν· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸ καθ' 10 αὐτὸ τοῦτο ἄξιόν ἐστι μαθήσεως, καὶ τὴν περὶ θεῶν ἐπιστήμην τελειότεραν ἀπεργάζεται. Φημὶ δὴ οὖν ὥς τὸ μὲν πρῶτον τῆς εὐχῆς εἶδος ἐστι συναγωγόν, συναφῆς τε τῆς πρὸς τὸ θεῖον καὶ γνωρίσεως ἐξηγούμενον· [238] τὸ δ' ἐπὶ τούτῳ κοινωνίας ὁμονοητικῆς συνδετικόν, δόσεις τε προκαλοῦ- 1 μενον τὰς ἐκ θεῶν καταπεμπομένας πρὸ τοῦ λόγου, καὶ πρὸ τοῦ νοῆσαι τὰ ὅλα ἔργα ἐπιτελούσας· τὸ δὲ τελεώτατον αὐτῆς ἡ ἄρρητος ἔνωσις ἐπισφραγίζεται, τὸ πᾶν κῦρος ἐνιδρύνουσα τοῖς θεοῖς, καὶ τελέως ἐν αὐτοῖς κείσθαι τὴν ψυχὴν ἡμῶν παρέχουσα. 5

Ἐν τρισὶ δὲ τούτοις ὅροις, ἐν οἷς τὰ θεῖα πάντα μετρεῖται, τὴν πρὸς θεοὺς ἡμῶν φιλίαν συναρμόσασα καὶ τὸ ἀπὸ τῶν θεῶν ἱερατικὸν ὄφελος τριπλοῦν ἐνδίδωσι, τὸ μὲν εἰς ἐπίλαμψιν τεῖνον, τὸ δὲ εἰς κοινήν ἀπεργασίαν, τὸ δὲ εἰς τὴν τελείαν ἀποπλήρωσιν ἀπὸ τοῦ πυρός· καὶ ποτὲ μὲν

[237].10 ταύτης VM: αὐτῆς cj. B | ὀλίγα M: ὀλίγον V || 14 τούτῳ M<sup>c</sup>: τούτων V et (ut vid.) M || [238].1-2 προκαλοῦμενον V: προσκαλοῦμενον M || 3 ὅλα ἔργα V: ἔργα ὅλα M

26 Since by no means the least part of sacrificial procedure is that of prayers,<sup>354</sup> and indeed prayers serve to confer the highest degree of completeness upon sacrifices, and as it is by means of them that the whole efficacy of sacrifices is reinforced and brought to perfection, and a joint contribution is made to cult, and an indissoluble hieratic communion is created with the gods, there will be no harm in saying a few words on that subject. In fact, it is a worthy subject of study in itself, as well as rendering our knowledge of the gods more perfect. I declare, then that the first degree of prayer is the introductory,<sup>355</sup> which leads to contact and acquaintance with the divine; the second is conjunctive, producing a union of sympathetic minds, and calling forth benefactions sent down by the gods even before we express our requests, while achieving whole courses of action even before we think of them; the most perfect, finally, has as its mark ineffable unification, which establishes all authority in the gods, and provides that our souls rest completely in them.

According to the distinction of these three levels, then, which measure out the whole range of interaction with the divine, prayer establishes links of friendship between us and the gods, and secures for us the triple advantage which we gain from the gods through theurgy, the first leading to illumination, the second to the common achievement of projects, and the third to the perfect fulfilment (of the soul) through fire.<sup>356</sup> Sometimes it precedes

his general treatise *On Gods*. He is reported by Julian, at any rate, as discussing the precise identity (in Greek terms) of the gods Monimos and Azizos, whom he equates with Hermes and Ares respectively.

<sup>354</sup> The subject of this section is not really prayer in the traditional Greek form, but rather theurgic prayer, which was doubtless not very different from the formulae prescribed in the magical papyri, including the use of magical names, sacred words, and even strings of vowels. For a discussion of Iamblichus's theory of prayer, as set out also in his *Timaeus* commentary, cf. Dillon (1973, 407–11).

<sup>355</sup> It seems best to construct technical terms for each of the three stages, since they will be explained in what follows. Even so, the exact distinctions are not very clear. The first stage, at least, produces only preliminary acquaintance—establishes a line of communication, one might say; the second plainly results in joint actions, leading to the conferral of benefits; the third, finally, involves some type of mystical union (such as Plotinus is asserted by Porphyry to have attained on a number of occasions, *Vit. Plot.* 23).

<sup>356</sup> That is to say, fire in the Chaldaean sense, the immaterial fire of divine power.

προηγείται τῶν θυσιῶν, ποτὲ δ' αὖ μεταξὺ διαλαμβάνει τὴν ἱεροουργίαν, 10  
 ἄλλοτε δ' αὖ τὸ τέλος τῶν θυσιῶν ἀποπληροῖ· ἔργον τε οὐδὲν ἱερατικὸν  
 ἄνευ τῶν ἐν ταῖς εὐχαῖς ἱκετειῶν γίγνεται. Ἡ δ' ἐν αὐταῖς ἐγχερόνισσος  
 διατριβὴ τρέφει μὲν τὸν ἡμέτερον νοῦν, τὴν δὲ τῆς ψυχῆς ὑποδοχὴν τῶν  
 [239] θεῶν ποιεῖ λίαν εὐρυτέραν, ἀνοίγει δὲ τοῖς | ἀνθρώποις τὰ τῶν θεῶν, 1  
 συνήθειαν δὲ παρέχει πρὸς τὰς τοῦ φωτὸς μαρμαρυγὰς, κατὰ βραχὺ δὲ  
 τελειοῖ τὰ ἐν ἡμῖν πρὸς τὰς τῶν θεῶν συναφάς, ἕως ἂν ἐπὶ τὸ ἀκρότατον  
 ἡμᾶς ἐπαναγάγῃ, καὶ τὰ μὲν ἡμέτερα τῆς διανοίας ἦθη ἡρέμα ἀνέλκει, τὰ  
 δὲ τῶν θεῶν ἡμῖν ἐκδίδωσι, πειθὼ δὲ καὶ κοινωνίαν καὶ φιλίαν ἀδιάλυτον 5  
 ἐγείρει, τὸν τε θεῖον ἔρωτα συναύξει, καὶ τὸ θεῖον τῆς ψυχῆς ἀνάπτει,  
 ἀποκαθαίρει τε πᾶν τὸ ἐναντίον τῆς ψυχῆς, καὶ ἀπορρίπτει τοῦ αἰθερώ-  
 δους καὶ ἀγοειδοῦς πνεύματος περὶ αὐτὴν ὅσον ἐστὶ γενεσιουργόν, ἐλπίδα  
 τε ἀγαθὴν καὶ τὴν περὶ τὸ φῶς πίστιν τελειοῖ, καὶ τὸ ὅλον εἰπεῖν, ὁμιλη-  
 τὰς τῶν θεῶν, ἵνα οὕτως εἰπωμεν, τοὺς χρωμένους αὐταῖς ἀπεργάζεται. 10

Εἰ δὴ τοῦτό ἐστιν ὅπερ εὐχὴν ἂν τις εἴποι, ὁρᾷ τε ἐν ἡμῖν τοσαῦτα  
 ἀγαθὰ τὸ τοιοῦτον, ἔχει τε πρὸς τὰς θυσίας ἢν εἰρήκαμεν κοινωνίαν, πῶς  
 οὐ καὶ διὰ τούτου καταφανὲς γίγνεται τὸ τῶν θυσιῶν τέλος, ὡς συναφῆς  
 [240] καὶ αὐτὸ δημιουργικῆς μετείληχεν ἐπειδὴ δι' ἔργων οἴκειοῦται τοῖς θεοῖς, 1  
 τό τε ἀγαθὸν αὐτῆς ὡς τοσοῦτόν ἐστιν ὅσον ἀπὸ τῶν δημιουργικῶν αἰτίων  
 καταπέμπεται εἰς ἀνθρώπους; καὶ μὴν ἀπ' ἐκείνου γε αἰθέρις τὸ τῶν εὐχῶν  
 ἀναγωγὸν καὶ τελεσιουργὸν καὶ ἀποπληρωτικὸν εὐδηλον γίγνεται, πῶς  
 μὲν δραστήριον πῶς δὲ ἡνωμένον ἐπιτελεῖται πῶς δὲ ἔχει τὸν ἐνδιόμενον 5  
 ἀπὸ τῶν θεῶν κοινὸν σύνδεσμον· τὸ τρίτον τοίνυν, ὡς ἄμφω δι' ἀλλήλων  
 βεβαιοῦνται, καὶ δύναμιν ἐντίθησιν εἰς ἀλληλα ἀγιστείας τελείαν ἱερατικὴν,  
 ὁραδίως ἂν τις ἀπὸ τῶν εἰρημένων κατανοήσειεν.

[238].11 τε VM: δὲ cj. A || [239].5 ἐκδίδωσι VM: ἐνδίδωσι cj. Gale |  
 ἀδιάλυτον cj. W cum Vergicio i. m. R: ἀδιάλυτον VM ἀδιάλειπ(τ)ον (ei s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>  
 || 14 καὶ αὐτὸ M: ἑαυτὸ V || [240].4 εὐδηλον VM: ἐκδηλον cj. F

sacrifices, sometimes, again, it comes in the middle of theurgic activity, and at other times it brings sacrifices to a suitable conclusion; but no sacred act can take place without the supplications contained in prayers. Extended practice of prayer nurtures our intellect, enlarges very greatly our soul's receptivity to the gods, reveals to men the life of the gods, accustoms their eyes to the brightness of divine light,<sup>357</sup> and gradually brings to perfection the capacity of our faculties for contact with the gods, until it leads us up to the highest level of consciousness (of which we are capable); also, it elevates gently the dispositions of our minds,<sup>358</sup> and communicates to us those of the gods, stimulates persuasion and communion and indissoluble friendship, augments divine love, kindles the divine element in the soul, scour away all contrary tendencies within it, casts out from the aetherial and luminous vehicle<sup>359</sup> surrounding the soul everything that tends to generation, brings to perfection good hope and faith concerning the light;<sup>360</sup> and, in a word, it renders those who employ prayers, if we may so express it, the familiar consorts of the gods.

If this is how one can describe prayer, and if it works such benefits within us, and if it possesses the connection with sacrifice which we have claimed for it, how would this not cast light on the final purpose of sacrifice, that is to say that it brings us into contact with the demiurge, since it renders us akin to the gods through acts; and on its good, that it is co-extensive with all that is sent down from the demiurgic causes to men? And this in turn will make clear the elevative and efficacious and fulfilling function of prayer, how it is effective, how it produces unification, and how it preserves the common link that is vouchsafed to us from the gods. And, thirdly, one could easily grasp from what has been said how sacrifice and prayer reinforce each other, and communicate to each other a perfect ritual and hieratic power.

<sup>357</sup> Cf. II.8.86 on the divine visions as beyond the natural tolerance and capacity of human faculties and on the necessity for angelic help in rendering the visions tolerable.

<sup>358</sup> Perhaps the intellectual virtues of the soul.

<sup>359</sup> That is, the pneumatic vehicle.

<sup>360</sup> This mention of "hope" and "faith," together with that of "love" just above, completes the enumeration of the Chaldaean triad of virtues; cf. Psellus, *Hypotyposis* 74.28 Kroll, 199 Des Places, and Proclus, *Comm. Tim.* 1.212.19; *Comm. Alc.* 51.15-16.



Διόπερ δὴ δι' ὅλων φαίνεται τῆς ἱερατικῆς ἀγωγῆς ἡ πᾶσα σύμ-  
 πνοια καὶ συνέργεια πρὸς ἐαυτήν, ζῶον παντὸς μᾶλλον συμφυῆ τὰ μόρια 10  
 ἐαυτῆς παντάπασι κατὰ μίαν συνέχειαν συνάπτονσα, ἥς οὐδέποτε δεῖ κατ-  
 αμελεῖν, οὐδὲ τὰ ἡμίση μέρη αὐτῆς ἐγκρίνοντας τὰ ἄλλα ἀποδοκιμάζειν·  
 ὁμοίως δὲ πᾶσιν ἐγγυμνάζεσθαι καὶ δι' ὅλων αὐτῶν τελειοῦσθαι χρὴ τοὺς  
 ἐθέλοντας εἰλικρινῶς τοῖς θεοῖς συνάπτεσθαι.

This all serves to reveal the total unity of spirit and action that characterises the procedure of theurgy, linking its parts to one another with a completely unbroken coherence, closer than that of any living thing. This is something that one should never neglect, nor, by adopting one or another half of it, exclude the rest. Rather, those who aspire to unite themselves absolutely with the gods should exercise themselves equally in all its branches, and strive to achieve perfection in all of them.

## VI

[241] | **1** Ταῦτα μὲν οὖν οὐκ ἂν ἄλλως ἔχοι· τὸ δὲ λοιπὸν ἐμοὶ καιρὸς 1  
ἐπὶ τὴν ἐξῆς ἀπορίαν ὧν σὺ προτείνεις μεταβαίνειν. Τί γὰρ δήποτε, ὡς ὁ  
σὸς λόγος, νεκροῦ μὲν ἀναφῇ δεῖν εἶναι τὸν ἐπόπτην, διὰ δὲ νεκρῶν ζώ-  
ων τὰ πολλὰ αἱ θεαγωγίαι ἐπιτελοῦνται; πάλιν οὖν καὶ ταῦτα διαλύοντες  
τὴν δοκοῦσαν εἶναι μάχην ἐπισκεψώμεθα· μὴ οὐδαμῶς ἢ τις ἐν αὐτῇ ἀν- 5  
τίθεις, φαίνεται δὲ μόνον ἐναντίως ἔχειν. Εἰ μὲν γὰρ τῶν αὐτῶν νεκρῶν  
σωμάτων καὶ ἀπείχοντο τῆς ἀφῆς καὶ ἤπτοντο, ἦν ἂν τοῦτο πρὸς ἑαυτὸ  
ὑπεναντίον· εἰ δὲ ἄλλων μὲν ἀπέχεσθαι παραγγέλλουσι τῶν ἀνιέρων, ἄλ-  
λων δὲ ἄπτεσθαι ὅσα καθιεροῦνται, οὐδεμίαν τοῦτο ἔχει ἐναντίωσιν. Ἔτι  
τοίνυν τῶν μὲν ἀνθρωπείων σωμάτων, ἐπειδὴν ἀπολίπη αὐτὰ ἡ ψυχὴ, οὐχ 10  
ὅσιον θιγγάνειν (τῆς γὰρ θείας ζωῆς ἵχνος τι ἢ εἶδωλον ἢ ἔμβασις ἐνα-  
ποσβέννυται ἐν τῷ σώματι κατὰ τὸν θάνατον), τῶν δὲ ἄλλων ζώων οὐκέτι  
[242] ἀνόσιον ἄπτεσθαι τεθνηκότων, ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ κεκοινωνήκασιν τῆς θειοτέρας | 1  
ζωῆς. Ἔστι τοίνυν πρὸς ἄλλους μὲν τὸ ἀναφῆς οἰκεῖον, οἷον τοὺς ὕλης  
καθαροὺς θεούς, πρὸς ἄλλους δὲ τὸ κλητικὸν διὰ τῶν ζώων ἀποδέδοται  
τοὺς ἐπιβεβηκότας τῶν ζώων καὶ προσεχῶς αὐτοῖς συνηρημένους· οὐδὲ 5  
κατὰ τοῦτο οὖν συμβαίνει τις ἐναντίωσις.

**2** Καὶ ἄλλως δ' ἂν τις τοῦτο διαλύσειεν· ἀνθρώποις μὲν γὰρ ἐν  
ὕλῃ κατεχομένοις τὰ ἐστερημένα τῆς ζωῆς σώματα φέρει τινὰ κηλῖδα,  
διότι τῷ ζῶντι τὸ μὴ ζῶν, ὥσπερ τῷ καθαρῷ τὸ ῥυπαρὸν καὶ τῷ ἐν

[241].1 ἔχοι V et (οἱ s. v.) M<sup>c</sup>: ἔχῃ M || 3 ἀναφῇ i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: ἀληθῇ VM  
ἀθιγῇ cj. Gale (cf. Euseb. pr. ev. 5, 10; Theodoret. gr. aff. cur. 3, 66) | δεῖν  
VM: δεῖ cj. B || 4 ἐπιτελοῦνται VM: ἐκτελοῦνται Eus. Theod. || 10 οὐχ  
VM: οὐκ cj. Gale || 11 ὅσιον scripsi (praeunte Sicherl p. 171, n. 2): ὅψιν V  
ὅψιν M ἔξεστι cj. Gale | ἡ<sup>1</sup> i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: om. VM | ἔμβασις VM: ἔμφασις (φ  
supra β) V<sup>2</sup> || 13 ἐπεὶ VM: ἐπειδὴ cj. B || [242].2 ἔστι M: ἔτι V

## BOOK VI

1 These things, then, cannot be held to be otherwise; but it is time for me to pass on to the next difficulty which you put forward: “for why on earth is it necessary,” according to your account, “for the initiate who views the rites to be untouched by the dead, when most invocations<sup>361</sup> are accomplished by means of dead animals?” Once again, therefore, let us examine the contention in order to dispel the apparent conflict—in fact, there is no discrepancy, and it only appears to be contradictory. If it were that one should both touch and have no contact with the *same* dead bodies, then this would constitute a contradiction; but if (the priests) recommend that some (corpses) should be abstained from as unholy while others which have been consecrated may be touched, this contains no contradiction. Moreover, it is forbidden to touch human corpses after their soul has abandoned them (for some trace, image or imprint<sup>362</sup> of divine life has been nullified in the body at death),<sup>363</sup> but it is not consequently sacrilegious to have contact with other dead animals, because they have not shared in the more divine life. This position on them is also appropriate for some gods that are pure from matter, but for others, who preside over animals, and who are directly connected with them, the invocation through animals is granted.<sup>364</sup> On this basis, therefore, there is no contradiction.

2 This difficulty may also be dealt with in another way. Bodies deprived of life bring some defilement to human beings confined in matter, because that which is not living introduces some kind of stain into the living, as dirt does onto what is pure,

<sup>361</sup> θεωρωται: cf. II.10.92.10 and note ad loc.

<sup>362</sup> Following Ficino’s εμφασις for the εμβασις of V and M.

<sup>363</sup> See Eunapius, *Vit. soph.* 459 for the story of Iamblichus’s miraculous ability to sense the impurity caused by the recent presence of a human corpse in the vicinity.

<sup>364</sup> “Abamon” has already elaborated the idea that different deities require worship in varying degrees of corporeality at V.19.225–226. Cf. Porphyry, *Abst.* 2.34–37; Apollonius of Tyana ap. Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 4.150; Macrobius, *In somn. Scip.* 1.7.3. See Smith (1974, 97); Shaw (1995, 143–61).

ἔξει τὸ ἐν στερήσει, μολυσμὸν τινα ἐντίθῃσιν, καὶ διότι τῷ μὲν δύναμιν ἔχοντι τοῦ ἀποθνήσκειν ἐμποιεῖ τινα μολυσμὸν διὰ τὴν φυσικὴν τὸ χεῖρον 10 πρὸς αὐτὸ ἐπιτηδειότητα, δαίμονι δὲ τὸ σῶμα ἀσωμάτῳ ὄντι παντελῶς καὶ μὴ παραδεχομένῳ φθορὰν μηδαμόθεν, οὐδένα ἐμποιεῖ μολυσμὸν· ἀλλ' ὑπερέχειν ἀνάγκη τοῦ διεφθαρμένου σώματος καὶ μηδεμίαν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ πα- ραδέχεσθαι τινα εἰς ἑαυτὸν φθορᾶς ἔμφασιν.

[243] | **3** Πρὸς μὲν οὖν τὴν ἐναντίωσιν τῆς ἀπορίας τοσαῦτα λέγω· 1 αὐτὸ δὲ καθ' ἑαυτὸ τὸ διὰ τῶν ἱερῶν ζώων, ὥσπερ τῶν ἱεράκων, ὅπως ἐπιτελεῖται μαντικὸν διερμηνεύοντες, θεοὺς μὲν οὐδέποτε φαμεν παραγί- γνεσθαι τῇ χρήσει τῶν κηδευθέντων οὕτω σωμάτων· οὔτε γὰρ μεριστῶς οὔτε προσεχῶς οὔτε ἐνύλως οὔτε μετὰ τινος σχέσεως προϊστανται τῶν 5 καθ' ἕκαστα ζώων· δαίμοσι δὲ καὶ τούτοις σφόδρα διηρημένοις καὶ διαλα- χοῦσιν ἄλλοις ἄλλα ζῶα προσεχῶς τε ἐπιβεβηκόσι τῇ τοιαύτῃ προστασίᾳ καὶ οὐ παντελῶς αὐτάρκη καὶ ἄυλον τὴν οἰκείαν ἀρχὴν διακληρωσαμένοις, ἢ τοιαύτῃ δεδόσθω τῶν μαντικῶν ὀργάνων ἐπαφή· ἢ εἰ οὕτω τις βούλοιτο τίθεσθαι, ἔδρα αὐτοῖς ἀπονενεμήσθω τοιαύτῃ, δι' ἧς ἀνθρώποις ὀμιλεῖν 10 καὶ χρῆσθαι πεφύκασιν· σωμάτων μὲν οὖν καὶ ταύτην εἶναι καθαρὰν δεῖ νομίζειν, οὐδεμία γὰρ γίγνεται κοινωνία τῷ καθαρῷ πρὸς τὸ ἐναντίον· διὰ δὲ τῆς ψυχῆς τῶν ζώων συνάπτεσθαι αὐτὴν ἀνθρώποις ἔχει τινὰ λόγον.

[244] Αὕτη γὰρ ἔχει τινὰ οἰκειότητα πρὸς ἀνθρώπους μὲν διὰ τὸ ὁμογενὲς | τῆς 1 ζωῆς, πρὸς δαίμονας δέ, διότι σωμάτων ἀπολυθεῖσα χωριστὴ πως ὑπάρ- χει· μέση δὲ οὕσα ἀμφοτέρων ὑπηρετεῖ μὲν τῷ ἐφεστηκότι, ἐξαγγέλλει δὲ τοῖς ἔτι κατεχομένοις ἐν σώματι ἅπερ ὁ ἐπιβεβηκὼς προστάττει, κοινὸν δὲ σύνδεσμον ἀμφοτέροις τούτοις πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἐνδίδωσι. 5

**4** Δεῖ δὲ ἡγεῖσθαι ὥς καὶ ἡ χρωμένη ψυχὴ τοῖς τοιοῦτοις μαν- τείοις οὐκ ἐπήκοος μόνον γίγνεται τῆς μαντείας, ἀλλὰ καὶ συμβάλλεται

[242].9 μὲν (μὴ cancell.) i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: μὴ VM || [243].9 δεδόσθω VM: δεδέσθω cj. B || 13 αὐτὴν VM: αὐτοὺς (ἦν p. n., οὗς s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 14 αὕτη VM: αὐτὴ cj. B || [244].3 ἐξαγγέλλει M: ἐξαγγέλει V || 5 ἐνδίδωσι VM: δίδωσι cj. B

and the state of privation does into the state of being in possession, and since it creates such a defilement in that which has the capacity to die through the natural tendency, as far as the lesser is concerned, towards itself; but a corpse creates no defilement in a daemon which is entirely incorporeal and incapable of receiving corruption; rather, (the daemon) necessarily transcends corruptible body, and in no way accepts any imprint of corruption into itself.

**3** So this is my response to the contradiction presented in your objection. But if we can consider, on its own terms, how divination is accomplished through sacred animals such as hawks,<sup>365</sup> we must never say that the gods come to bodies in service, as attendants; for they do not preside over any particular animal individually, or separately, or materially, or according to a certain condition. Rather, this kind of contact with the organs of divination should be ascribed to daemons and those such as are divided, to which an animal is individually allotted, and who govern partially in this manner, and have not been allotted an administration that is entirely self-sufficient and immaterial. Or, if one wishes to maintain that a base must be allotted to (the daemons), of the kind through which they can associate with and be of help to human beings, in that case we must concede that this (base) should be pure from bodies, for no communion occurs between the pure and its opposite. It makes greater sense that this is brought into communion with human beings through the *soul* of the animals; for this has a certain affinity with human beings through the homogeneity of life, but with daemons because it has been released from bodies and exists in some way separate. As a medium between both, it is thus subservient to its superior, while it proclaims whatever its principal directs to those still confined in body; it therefore imparts to both of them a common bond with one another.<sup>366</sup>

**4** One must understand that as the soul uses divinations of this kind, it becomes not just one that listens to divination,

<sup>365</sup> This probably refers to magical procedures such as we find at *PGM* I. 42 which require the use of a *φολακῆ* in a spell for acquiring daemonic or angelic assistance. See Porphyry, *Vit. Plot.* 10 for the presence of birds acting as a *φολακῆ* at another pseudo-Egyptian ritual.

<sup>366</sup> Saloustios (= Sallustius) *De dis* 16.2.4-8 argues that the appropriateness of sacrifice was that it involved the use of living beings, which shared the

τινα μοῖραν ἀφ' ἑαυτῆς οὐκ ὀλίγην εἰς τὴν ἀπεργασίαν αὐτῆς τὴν ἐπὶ τῶν  
 ἔργων· καὶ γὰρ συντρέπεται καὶ συνεργεῖ καὶ συμπρογιγνώσκει διὰ τινος  
 συμπαθοῦς ἀνάγκης· ἔστι μὲν οὖν ὁ τρόπος τῆς μαντείας οὗτος τοιοῦ- 10  
 τος πάντῃ διεστηκῶς τοῦ θείου καὶ ἀληθινοῦ τρόπου, περὶ σμικρῶν τε  
 καὶ ἐφημέρων πραγμάτων δυνάμενος προλέγειν, περὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ διηρημέ-  
 νῃ φύσει κειμένων ὅσα ἤδη περὶ τὴν γένεσιν ἐμφέρεται, κινήσεις τε ἀφ'  
 ἑαυτῶν παρέχει τοῖς δυναμένοις αὐτὰς δέχεσθαι, καὶ πάθη πολυειδῶς ἐμ-  
 ποιεῖ τοῖς πεφνυκόσιν ἐπιτηδείως εἰς τὸ συμπάσχειν· διὰ πάθους δὲ οὐκ 15  
 [245] ἂν παραγένοιτό ποτε ἢ τελεία πρόγνωσις· αὐτὸ γὰρ μάλιστα | τὸ ἄτρε- 1  
 πτόν τε καὶ ἄνυλον καὶ πάντῃ καθαρὸν τῷ μέλλοντι ἐπιβάλλειν εἴωθε, τὸ  
 δὲ συμμιγνύμενον πρὸς τὸ ἀλόγιστον καὶ σκοτεινὸν τοῦ σωματοειδοῦς καὶ  
 ὕλικου πληροῦται πολλῆς ἀγνώσκειας· ὅθεν οὐδέποτε τὴν τοιαύτην τεχνικὴν  
 κατασκευὴν εἰς τὸ μαντεύεσθαι ἀποδέχεσθαι ἄξιον. Οὐδὲ χρῆσθαι αὐτῇ 5  
 ἐπὶ μεγάλης σπουδῆς δεῖ, οὐδὲ ἄλλω χρωμένῳ πιστευτέον ὥς ἔχοντι παρ'  
 ἑαυτῶ σαφές καὶ γνώριμόν τι τεκμήριον τῆς ἀληθείας. Τοσαῦτα δὴ καὶ  
 περὶ τῆς τοιαύτης μαντείας ἡμῖν εἰρήσθω.

5 Φέρε δὴ οὖν καὶ περὶ ἄλλον γένους ἀποριῶν ἀποκεκρυμμένην  
 ἔχοντος τὴν αἰτίαν ποιησώμεθα λόγον· ὅπερ ἔχει μὲν, ὥς καὶ σὺν αὐ- 10  
 τὸς λέγεις, βιαστικὰς ἀπειλάς, μερίζεται δὲ περὶ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἀπειλῶν  
 πολυμερῶς· ἢ γὰρ τὸν οὐρανὸν προσαράξειν ἢ τὰ κρυπτὰ τῆς Ἰσίδος ἐκ-  
 [246] φανεῖν ἢ τὸ ἐν Ἀβύδῳ ἀπόρρητον δείξειν ἢ στήσειν | τὴν βάρυν ἢ τὰ 1  
 μέλη τοῦ Ὀσίριδος διασκεδάσειν τῷ Τυφῶνι ἢ ἄλλο τι τοιοῦτον ἀπειλεῖ

[244].13 ἐμφέρεται M: συμφέρεται V || 14 δέχεσθαι V: παραδέχεσθαι  
 M || [245].12 προσαράξειν M: προσαρράξειν V || 13 ἀβύδῳ cj. Sodano  
 Sicherl ex Eus. Theod. (cf. 248, 8): ἀβύσσῳ M et (σ s. v.) V<sup>c</sup> ἀβύσῳ V

but through the performances it also contributes, in no small way, some portion from itself towards their completion, for it turns together and co-operates and predicts in partnership with it, according to a certain force of sympathy. Therefore since such a mode of divination is entirely different from the mode which is divine and true, it has the power to predict only trifling and everyday events, things which lie in the sphere of divided nature and directly concern generation, and which impart motions from themselves to those who are able to receive them, and create multifarious passions in things naturally fit for impassionment. Perfect foreknowledge, by contrast, is never achieved through passion.<sup>367</sup> For it is that which is entirely immutable and also immaterial and entirely pure that is accustomed to apprehending future events; but that which is mingled with the irrationality and shadowiness of corporeal forms and matter is filled with abundant ignorance. Thus an artificial contrivance of this sort should in no way be valued as a mantic procedure. Nor should one even pay much regard to it, nor have confidence in another who makes use of it as if it possesses any kind of clear and proven sign of truth in its own right. Thus we have said enough about divination of this sort.

5 So, then, let us turn our attention to another set of problems, the explanation of which is obscure. As you say, (another type of divination) involves violent threats, and the nature of the threats is very varied. For it threatens either to burst the heavens or to reveal the secrets of Isis or to divulge the arcane object in Abydos,<sup>368</sup> or to halt the (sacred) barque<sup>369</sup> or scatter the limbs of Osiris for Typhon,<sup>370</sup> or do something else of this

force of life both with man and with the gods. At *De dis* 16.1 he argues that sacrifice is an intermediary between the human and the divine, which is a potted version of Iamblichus's ideas.

<sup>367</sup> On the negative results of the soul's contribution to divination, especially future-prediction, cf. III.7.114.6-7; III.13.130.2-6; III.31.176.13-177.6.

<sup>368</sup> Abydos was an area in Upper Egypt, where a strong association grew up between the myth of Isis and Osiris, and the Pharaohs. Cf. *PGM* IV. 106-108; *PDM* XIV. 628. The "arcane object" (ἀπόρρητον) here was the "red" tomb of Osiris; cf. Plutarch, *Is. Os.* 358a-b.

<sup>369</sup> An Egyptian flat-bottomed boat, sacred to Osiris. For the threat to halt the sacred barque cf. *PGM* III. 99.

<sup>370</sup> The Greeks associated Typhon, a monstrous adversary of Zeus, with Set, Osiris's brother, who murdered Osiris and cut him into pieces.



ποιήσιν. Τοῦτο δὴ πᾶν τὸ εἶδος τῶν λόγων οὐχ, ὡς σὺ νομίζεις, πρὸς ἥλιον ἢ σελήνην ἢ τινα τῶν κατ' οὐρανὸν ἐπανατείνονται οἱ ἄνθρωποι (ἔτι γὰρ ἂν συνέβη δεινότερα ἄτοπα ὧν σὺ σχετλιάζεις), ἀλλ' ὅπερ ἐν τοῖς 5 ἔμπροσθεν ἔλεγον, ἐπὶ τι γένος δυνάμεων ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ μεριστὸν ἄκριτον ἀλόγιστον, ὃ δέχεται μὲν ἀπ' ἄλλον λόγον καὶ κατακοῦει, οἰκεία δὲ συνέσει οὔτε χρῆται οὔτε τὸ ἀληθὲς καὶ ψεῦδος ἢ δυνατόν ἢ ἀδύνατον διακρίνει. Τὸ δὴ τοιοῦτον ἀθρόως ἐπανατεινόμενων τῶν ἀπειλῶν συγκινεῖται καὶ ἐκπλήττεται, ὡς ἂν οἶμαι πεφνκὸς αὐτό τε ἄγρεσθαι ταῖς ἐμφάσεσι καὶ τὰ 10 ἄλλα ψυχαγωγεῖν διὰ τῆς ἐμπλήκτου καὶ ἀσταθμῆτου φαντασίας.

6 Ἐχει δὲ ταῦτα καὶ ἄλλον τοιοῦτον λόγον. Ὁ θεουργὸς διὰ τὴν δύναμιν τῶν ἀπορρήτων συνθημάτων οὐκέτι ὡς ἄνθρωπος οὐδ' ὡς ἀνθρωπίνῃ ψυχῇ χρώμενος ἐπιτάττει τοῖς κοσμικοῖς, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐν τῇ τῶν [247] θεῶν τάξει προϋπάρχων | μερίζοσι τῆς καθ' ἑαυτὸν οὐσίας ἐπανατάσσει 1 χρῆται· οὐχ ὡς ποιήσων πάντα ἅπερ δισχυρίζεται, ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ τοιαύτῃ τῶν λόγων χρήσει διδάσκων ὅσῃν καὶ ἡλικίῃν καὶ τίνα ἔχει τὴν δύναμιν διὰ τὴν πρὸς θεοὺς ἔνωσιν, ἣν παρέσχηκεν αὐτῷ τῶν ἀπορρήτων συμβόλων ἢ γνώσις. Δύναται δὲ τις καὶ τοῦτο εἰπεῖν, ὡς τοσαύτην ἔχουσιν 5 οἱ κατὰ μέρη διηρημένοι δαίμονες, οἱ φυλάττοντες τὰ μέρη τοῦ παντός, ἐπιμέλειαν ἧς εἰλήχασιν ἕκαστοι μερίδος καὶ κηδεμονίαν, ὡς μηδὲ λόγον ἐναντίον ἀνέχεσθαι, τὴν δὲ αἰδίων διαμονὴν τῶν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ διαφυλάττειν ἀμετάτρεπτον. Ταύτην τοίνυν ἀμετάπτωτον παρειλήφασι, διότι τῶν

[246].6 μεριστὸν cj. Saffrey: μεριστῶς codd. || 9 δὴ VM: δὲ cj. B | τοιοῦτον M et (v add.) V<sup>2</sup>: τοιοῦτο V || 13 συνθημάτων M: om. V || [247].3 καὶ τίνα cj. Gale: διὰ τίνα VM καὶ διὰ τίνα (καὶ i. m.) V<sup>2</sup> || 4 παρέσχηκεν VM: παρέσχεν cj. Gale

kind.<sup>371</sup> However, human beings do not, as you think, hold out this entire class of discourse as a threat to the sun and the moon or any of the celestial gods (for that would produce even more outrageous consequences than those which you complain of) but, as I remarked earlier,<sup>372</sup> there exists a certain class of powers in the cosmos—limited, devoid of judgement and highly irrational, which are capable of receiving and obeying rational instruction from another, but neither has any understanding of its own nor distinguishes what is true or false or what is possible or impossible. It is such a class that is at once stirred up and startled when threats are brandished at them, since, it seems to me, it is in their own nature to be led by appearances and to be influenced by other things through a foolish and unstable imagination.

6 These things also have another explanation. The theurgist, through the power of arcane symbols, commands cosmic entities no longer as a human being or employing a human soul but, existing above them in the order of the gods, uses threats greater than are consistent with his own proper essence—not, however, with the implication that he would perform that which he asserts, but using such words to instruct them how much, how great and what sort of power he holds through his unification with the gods, which he gains through knowledge of the ineffable symbols. One may also say this, that such daemons are allotted partial administrative power, and guard the parts of the universe; they are attentive to the part over which they each preside to the extent that they cannot allow a word said against it, and their concern is to preserve the eternal permanence of the things unchanging in the world. Moreover, they have taken on the task of maintaining

<sup>371</sup> These threats are characteristic of magic; cf. *PGM* IV. 2313; V. 253–303; XII. 134. “Abamon” also explains the theurgic ability to order spirits at *Myst.* IV.2. For the ordering and abuse of daemons during exorcisms, note especially those supposedly carried out by Jesus, reported by Mark 5:2–10; Matt 7:28–33; Luke 8:26–39 (cf. Porphyry, *Christ.* frg. 49 Harnack for critical comment on this particular case); Mark 1:23–27; 3:22; 9:17–27; Matt 12:22; 17:14–21; Luke 9:35–45; 11:14–26; 13:10–16; cf. Josephus, *A.J.* 8.45. For strikingly similar pagan sources, see Lucian, *Philops.* 16; Philostratus, *Vit. Apoll.* 3.38; 4.20.

<sup>372</sup> At IV.1–2.

θεῶν ἢ τάξεις ἀκίνητος κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ διαμένει· ἐν ᾧ τοίνυν ἔχουσι τὸ εἶναι 10  
οἱ τε ἀέριοι καὶ οἱ περὶ γῆν δαίμονες, τοῦτο οὐδὲ ἄχρῃς ἀκοῆς ἀνέχονται  
ἀπειλούμενον.

7 Ἡ καὶ οὕτως ἄν τις ἀποδοίῃ τὸν ἀπολογισμὸν· τῶν ἀπορρητῶν  
μυστηρίων οἱ δαίμονες ἐπιτροπεύουσι τὴν φυλακὴν, οὕτω δὴ τι διαφερόν-  
[248] τως ὥς ἐνταῦθα πρῶτως | συνεχομένης τῆς ἐν τῷ παντὶ διακοσμήσεως. 1  
Διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ μένει μὲν ἐν τάξει τὰ τοῦ παντός μόρια, διότι ἡ ἀγαθοποιὸς  
τοῦ Ὀσίριδος δύναμις ἀγνὴ καὶ ἄχραντος μένει, καὶ οὐ συμμίγνυται πρὸς  
τὴν ἐναντίαν πλημμέλειαν καὶ ταραχὴν, μένει δὲ καὶ ἡ τῶν ὄλων ζωὴ καθ-  
αρὰ καὶ ἀδιάφθορος, ἐπειδὴ τὰ ἀπόκρυφα ζωογόνα τῶν λόγων κάλλη τῆς 5  
Ἰσιδος οὐ κἀτεισιν εἰς τὸ φαινόμενον καὶ ὁρώμενον σῶμα. Ἀκίνητα δὲ  
διατελεῖ πάντα καὶ ἀειγενῆ, διότι οὐδέποτε ἴσταται ὁ τοῦ ἡλίου δρόμος·  
τέλεα δὲ καὶ ὁλόκληρα διαμένει πάντα, ἐπειδὴ τὰ ἐν Ἀβύδῳ ἀπόρρητα  
οὐδέποτε ἀποκαλύπτεται· οἷς οὖν ἔχει τὴν σωτηρίαν τὰ ὅλα (λέγω δὲ ἐν  
τῷ τὰ ἀπόρρητα κεκρυμμένα ἀεὶ διατηρεῖσθαι καὶ ἐν τῷ τὴν ἄφθεργκτον 10  
τῶν θεῶν οὐσίαν μηδέποτε τῆς ἐναντίας μεταλαμβάνειν μοίρας), τοῦτο  
οὐδ' ἄχρῃ φωνῆς ἀνεκτόν ἐστι τοῖς περιγείοις δαίμοσιν ἐπακούειν ὥς ἄλ-  
[249] λως ἔχον ἢ βέβηλον γιγνόμενον, καὶ διὰ | τοῦτο ἔχει τινὰ πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὁ 1  
τοιούτος τρόπος τῶν λόγων· θεοῖς δὲ οὐδεὶς ἀπειλεῖ, οὐδ' ἐστὶ τις τοιοῦ-  
τος τρόπος εὐχῆς πρὸς αὐτοὺς γιγνόμενος. Διόπερ παρὰ Χαλδαίοις, παρ'  
οἷς διακέκριται καθαρὸς ὁ πρὸς μόνους τοὺς θεοὺς λόγος, οὐδαμοῦ ἀπειλὴ  
λέγεται· Αἰγύπτιοι δὲ συμμιγνύοντες ἅμα μετὰ τῶν θείων συνθημάτων 5  
καὶ τοὺς δαιμονίους λόγους, χρῶνται ἔστιν ὅτε καὶ ταῖς ἀπειλαῖς. Ἐχεις  
δὴ καὶ τὴν περὶ τούτων ἀπόκρισιν συντόμως μὲν μετρίως δ' ἐγῶμαι ἀπο-  
κεκαθαυμένην.

[247].12 ἀπειλούμενον M: ἀπειλάμενον V || 14 τι VM: τοι cj. B ||  
[248].2 μὲν V: om. M || 8 ἀβύδῳ VM: ἀβύσσῳ (σσω i. m.) V<sup>2</sup> || 10  
κεκρυμμένα M: κεκρυμμένος V κεκρυμμένως (ω s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || [249].1 ἔχει VM:  
ἔχει δύναμιν (δύναμιν i. m.) V<sup>2</sup> | τινά an τι? || 4 μόνους M et (ου s. v.)  
V<sup>r</sup>: μόνος V | ἀπειλὴ M: ἀπειλεῖ V ἀπειλεῖν (ν s. v.) V<sup>r</sup> || 7 δ' ἐγῶμαι scr.  
Gale: δέγῶμαι V δέγ' ὦμαι M

this changelessness because the order of the gods remains immovably the same. Held as they are in this state, then, the aerial and terrestrial daemons cannot endure even to hear threats against it.

7 Or this may also be explained as follows. Daemons assume guardianship over the arcane mysteries, because, to a remarkable extent, they primarily contain the orderly arrangement in the world. For it is for this reason that the parts of the universe remain in order, because the beneficent power of Osiris remains sacred and immaculate and is not mingled with the opposing confusion or disorder;<sup>373</sup> and the life of all things remains pure and incorruptible, since the hidden vivifying beauties of the reason-principles of Isis do not descend into apparent and visible body. Rather, all things continue immovable and eternal, because the course of the sun is never halted, and all things remain perfect and entire, since the mysteries in Abydos are never disclosed. As regards, then, that by which the safety of all is preserved (I mean in the eternal preservation of the hidden mysteries, and in the ineffable essence of the gods, never receiving a portion of that which is contrary to it), the terrestrial daemons cannot endure even hearing the suggestion that there could be any alteration or desecration, and this is why this manner of address holds some power over them. But no one threatens the gods, nor does such a manner of invocation occur in relation to them. Hence, among the Chaldaeans, by whom language used for the gods alone is preserved in its purity, threats are never uttered. The Egyptians, however, who combine addresses to daemons with divine symbols, do sometimes use threats.<sup>374</sup> Thus you have an answer to these difficulties which is brief but, I think, sufficiently clear.

<sup>373</sup> For the Platonic concept of daemons and other mediating deities in this context cf. Plutarch, *Is. Os.* 361a–c.

<sup>374</sup> Iamblichus perhaps reveals his true sympathies here.

## VII

1 Τῆς δ' αὐτῆς θεοσόφου Μούσης κακείνα δεῖται εἰς τὴν διάλυσιν  
τὰ ἀπορήματα· πρότερον δέ σοι βούλομαι τῶν Αἰγυπτίων τὸν τρόπον τῆς 10  
θεολογίας διερμηνεῦσαι· οὗτοι γὰρ τὴν φύσιν τοῦ παντὸς καὶ τὴν δημιουργ-  
[250] γίαν | τῶν θεῶν μιμούμενοι καὶ αὐτοὶ τῶν μυστικῶν καὶ ἀποκεκρυμμένων 1  
καὶ ἀφανῶν νοήσεων εἰκόνας τινὰς διὰ συμβόλων ἐκφαίνουσιν, ὥσπερ καὶ  
ἡ φύσις τοῖς ἐμφανέσιν εἶδεσι τοὺς ἀφανεῖς λόγους διὰ συμβόλων τρόπον  
τινὰ ἀπετυπώσατο, ἡ δὲ τῶν θεῶν δημιουργία τὴν ἀλήθειαν τῶν ἰδεῶν  
διὰ τῶν φανερῶν εἰκόνων ὑπεγράψατο. Εἰδότες οὖν χαίροντα πάντα τὰ 5  
κρείττονα ὁμοιώσει τῶν ὑποδεεστέρων καὶ βουλόμενοι αὐτὰ ἀγαθῶν οὖ-  
τω πληροῦν διὰ τῆς κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν μιμήσεως, εἰκότως καὶ αὐτοὶ τὸν  
πρόσφορον αὐτῆς τρόπον τῆς κεκρυμμένης ἐν τοῖς συμβόλοις μυσταγω-  
γίας προσφέρουσιν.

2 Ἄκουε δὴ οὖν καὶ σὺ κατὰ τὸν τῶν Αἰγυπτίων νοῦν τὴν τῶν 10  
συμβόλων νοερὰν διερμηνεύσιν, ἀφελὲς μὲν τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς φαντασίας καὶ τῆς  
ἀκοῆς εἰδῶλον αὐτῶν τῶν συμβολικῶν, ἐπὶ δὲ τὴν νοερὰν ἀλήθειαν ἐαν-  
τὸν ἐπαναγαγών. Ἴδὼν μὲν τοίνυν νόει τὸ σωματοειδὲς πᾶν καὶ ὕλικόν ἢ  
[251] τὸ θρεπτικόν καὶ γόνιμον ἢ ὅσον ἐστὶν ἔνυλον | εἶδος τῆς φύσεως μετὰ 1  
τῶν ἀστάτων τῆς ὕλης ῥευμάτων συμφερόμενον, ἢ ὅσον τὸν ποταμὸν τῆς  
γενέσεως χωρεῖ, καὶ αὐτὸ μετ' ἐκεῖνου συνιζάνον, ἢ τῶν στοιχείων καὶ  
τῶν περὶ τοῖς στοιχείοις δυνάμεων πασῶν ἀρχηγὸν αἴτιον ἐν πνυθμένος

[249].10 δέ VM: δὴ cj. Gale || [250].4 ἰδεῶν VM: εἰδῶν («εἰδεῶν») cj.  
B || 8 αὐτῆς VM: αὐτοῖς (οἱς s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 9 προσφέρουσιν M: προσφέρουσιν  
V || 12 συμβολικῶν VM: συμβόλων cj. Gale || [251].4 περὶ ] an παρὰ?

## BOOK VII

1 The following difficulties require the same theosophical<sup>375</sup> Muse for their solution, but first of all, I would like to explain to you the mode of theology practised by the Egyptians. For these people, imitating the nature of the universe and the demiurgic power of the gods, display certain signs of mystical, arcane and invisible intellections by means of symbols, just as nature copies the unseen principles in visible forms through some mode of symbolism,<sup>376</sup> and the creative activity of the gods indicates the truth of the forms in visible signs. Perceiving, therefore, that all superior beings rejoice in the efforts of their inferiors to imitate them, and therefore wish to fill them with good things, insofar as it is possible through imitation, it is reasonable that they<sup>377</sup> should proffer a mode of concealment that is appropriate to the mystical doctrine of concealment in symbols.

2 Hear, therefore, the intellectual interpretation of the symbols, according to Egyptian thought: banish the image of the symbolic things themselves, which depends on imagination and hearsay, and raise yourself up towards the intellectual truth. Understand, then, that “mud” represents all that is corporeal and material; or that which is nutritive and fertile;<sup>378</sup> or, as such as is the form immanent in nature,<sup>379</sup> that which is carried along with the unstable flux of matter;<sup>380</sup> or some such thing as receives the river of generation itself, and settles with it; or the primordial cause, pre-established as a foundation of the elements and of

<sup>375</sup> The only occurrence of this term in the *De mysteriis*, and we leave it in its technical form. It might be rendered, “skilled in divine matters.” Cf. Porphyry, *Abst.* 2.35; Proclus, *Theol. plat.* 5.127.16.

<sup>376</sup> The recapitulation of a point made at I.11.37.

<sup>377</sup> That is, the Egyptians.

<sup>378</sup> “Mud” or “slime” seems to represent the “primeval waters of Egyptian myth”; see our “Introduction.” For references in Plato to slime or mud, see *Phaedr.* 250c6; *Resp.* 363d7.

<sup>379</sup> A distinctively Platonic phrase.

<sup>380</sup> This may owe something to the language of Plato, *Tim.* 43b, where the soul is plunged into the body for the first time.

λόγῳ προϋποκείμενον. Τοιούτου δὲ ὄντος αὐτοῦ, ὁ τῆς γενέσεως καὶ φύ- 5  
σεως ὅλης καὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς στοιχείοις δυνάμεων πασῶν αἴτιος θεός, ἅτε  
δὴ ὑπερέχων τούτων ἄνλος καὶ ἄσώματος καὶ ὑπερφυῆς ἀγέννητός τε καὶ  
ἀμέριστος ὅλος ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ καὶ ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἀναφανείς, προηγείται πάντων  
τούτων καὶ ἐν ἑαυτῷ τὰ ὅλα περιέχει. Καὶ διότι μὲν συνείληφε πάντα 10  
καὶ μεταδίδωσιν ἑαυτοῦ τοῖς κοσμικοῖς ὅλοις, ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀνεφάνη· διότι δ'  
ὑπερέχει τῶν ὅλων καὶ καθ' ἑαυτὸν ὑπερήπλωται, ἀναφαίνεται ὥς χω-  
ριστός ἐξηρημένος μετέωρος καὶ καθ' ἑαυτὸν ὑπερηπλωμένος τῶν ἐν τῷ  
κόσμῳ δυνάμεων τε καὶ στοιχείων.

[252] Συμμαρτυρεῖ δὲ τούτῳ καὶ τὸ ἐξῆς σύμβολον. Τὸ γὰρ ἐπὶ λωτῷ κα-  
θέζεσθαι ὑπεροχὴν τε ὑπὲρ τὴν ἰλὸν | αἰνίττεται μὴ ψάuousan μηδαμῶς 1  
τῆς ἰλὸς, καὶ ἡγεμονίαν νοερὰν καὶ ἐμπύριον ἐπιδείκνυνται· κυκλοτερῆ  
γὰρ πάντα ὁρᾶται τὰ τοῦ λωτοῦ, καὶ τὰ ἐν τοῖς φύλλοις εἶδη καὶ τὰ ἐν  
τοῖς καρποῖς φαινόμενα, ἥπερ δὴ μόνη κινήσει τῇ κατὰ κύκλον νοῦ ἐνέρ-  
γειά ἐστι συγγενής, τὸ κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ ὡσαύτως καὶ ἐν μιᾷ τάξει καὶ 5  
καθ' ἓνα λόγον ἐμφαίνουσα. Αὐτὸς δὲ δὴ ὁ θεὸς ἴδρυνται καθ' ἑαυτὸν καὶ  
ὑπὲρ τὴν τοιαύτην ἡγεμονίαν καὶ ἐνέργειαν, σεμνὸς καὶ ἅγιος ὑπερηπλω-  
μένος καὶ μένων ἐν ἑαυτῷ, ὅπερ δὴ τὸ καθεζεσθαι βούλεται σημαίνειν. Ὁ

[251].8 ἀναφανείς VM: ἀναφανῆς cj. Gale || 14-15 καθεζεσθαι cj. Gale:  
καθεζεσθαι VM || [252].4 τῇ (ῆ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: τοῦ VM || 8 σημαίνειν cj. (υ p.  
n., η i. m., β cancell.) B<sup>4</sup>: συμβαίνειν VMB

all the powers that surround the elements. Of such a sort, therefore, is the god who is the cause of all generation and nature, and of all the powers in the elements, insomuch as he transcends these things, being immaterial, incorporeal, supernatural, unbegotten and impartible, revealing himself as a whole from himself and in himself; he precedes all things and also encompasses all things in himself. In that he embraces everything and grants himself to the whole cosmic realm, he is revealed in this. But in that he transcends everything and is entirely simplified, he appears as separate, removed, elevated and wholly simplified,<sup>381</sup> beyond the powers and elements of the cosmos.

The following symbol also bears witness to this. For “sitting on a lotus”<sup>382</sup> signifies transcendence over the “mud,” such as in no way touches the “mud,” and also indicates intellectual and empyrean<sup>383</sup> leadership. For everything to do with the lotus is seen to be circular, both the forms of the leaves and the produce of the fruit, and it is the circular motion that is uniquely connatural with the activity of intellect,<sup>384</sup> and which exhibits itself consistently in one order and according to one principle. And the god is established by himself, and beyond such leadership and activity, venerable and holy,<sup>385</sup> entirely simple and abiding in himself, a fact which his seated position is intended to signify. And “sailing in a ship”<sup>386</sup> represents the sovereignty that governs the world.

<sup>381</sup> For the term *ὑπερῆπλωμένος* (lit. “super-simplified”), see Damascius, *Princ.* 1.52.26; 55.9; 104.5; 157.3; *Comm. Parm.* 176.15; Proclus, *Comm. Parm.* 1.73.11; 77.27; 88.2; 2.133.6; 205.11; *Theol. plat.* 1.95.23; 2.67.16; 4.86.2; 5.127.6; 5.135.7; also Pseudo-Dionysius’s treatise *On Divine Names* 4.7. The transcendence of the Egyptian god is presented in distinctly Neoplatonic terms, possibly traceable back to Iamblichus’s commentaries; the terms *χωριστός* and *ἐξηρημένος* are common in Proclus.

<sup>382</sup> The god seated upon the lotus is, properly, Harpocrates, see *PGM* IV. 1105; note also *PGM* II. 106–107. See El-Kachab (1971) for discussion of some surviving examples of this image. The cosmic lotus also signified the power of Re (or Ra), its opening bud representing the coming of light over darkness. In botanical terms, the Egyptian lotus was the lily of the Nile; see Herodotus, 2.92.8–12.

<sup>383</sup> A Chaldaean term, see *Orac. chald.* frg. 2; 4; 130.

<sup>384</sup> The lotus is not, of course, in motion, but symbolises the circular motion of the heavens, which in turn manifests the motion of Intellect.

<sup>385</sup> *σεμνός καὶ ἅγιος*, an echo of Plato, *Soph.* 249a.

<sup>386</sup> Cf. *PGM* XIV. 33–34 for an address to Osiris, “who is in the divine barque.” The solar barque was a well-known Egyptian image of the seat of the



δ' ἐπὶ πλοίου ναυτιλλόμενος τὴν διακυβερνῶσαν τὸν κόσμον ἐπικράτειαν  
παρίστησιν. Ὡς περ οὖν ὁ κυβερνήτης χωριστὸς ὢν τῆς νεὸς τῶν πηδα- 10  
λίων αὐτῆς ἐπιβέβηκεν, οὕτω χωριστῶς ὁ ἥλιος τῶν οἰάκων τοῦ κόσμου  
παντὸς ἐπιβέβηκεν. Καὶ καθάπερ ἄνωθεν ἐκ πρύμνης ἀπενθύνει πάντα ὁ  
κυβερνήτης, ἐνδιδούς βραχεῖαν ἐξ ἑαυτοῦ τὴν πρώτην ἀρχὴν τῆς φορᾶς,  
οὕτω πολὺν πρότερον ὁ θεὸς ἄνωθεν ἀπὸ τῶν πρώτων ἀρχῶν τῆς φύσεως  
τὰς πρωτογενεῖς αἰτίας τῶν κινήσεων ἀμεριστῶς ἐνδίδωσι· ταῦτα δὲ οὖν 15

[253] καὶ ἔτι | πλείονα τούτων ἐνδείκνυται τὸ ναυτίλλεσθαι αὐτὸν ἐπὶ πλοίου. 1

**3** Ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ πᾶν μόριον τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ πᾶν ζῴδιον καὶ πᾶ-  
σα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ φορὰ καὶ πᾶς χρόνος, καθ' ὃν κινεῖται ὁ κόσμος, καὶ  
πάντα τὰ ἐν τοῖς ὅλοις δέχονται ἀπὸ τοῦ ἡλίου κατιούσας δυνάμεις, τὰς  
μὲν συμπλεκομένας αὐτοῖς τὰς δὲ τῆς συμμίξεως αὐτῶν ὑπερβεβηκυίας, 5  
παρίστησι καὶ ταύτας ὁ συμβολικὸς τρόπος τῆς σημασίας, τὸ σχηματί-  
ζεσθαι μὲν κατὰ ζῴδιον καὶ τὰς μορφὰς ἀμείβειν καθ' ὥραν τοῖς ὅημασι  
διασημαίνων, ἐκδεικνύμενος δὲ τὴν ἀμετάβλητον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐστῶσαν καὶ  
ἀνέκλειπτον καὶ ὁμοῦ πᾶσαν καὶ ἀθρόαν εἰς ὅλον τὸν κόσμον δόσιν. Ἄλλ'  
ἐπεὶ τὰ δεχόμενα ἄλλα ἀλλαχοῦ περὶ τὴν ἀμέριστον δόσιν τοῦ θεοῦ φέρε- 10  
ται, καὶ αὐτὰ δέχεται πολυειδεῖς δυνάμεις ἀπὸ τοῦ ἡλίου κατὰ τὰς οἰκείας  
ἐαυτῶν φορὰς, διὰ τοῦτο βούλεται μὲν ἡ συμβολικὴ διδαχὴ διὰ τοῦ πλή-  
θους τῶν δοθέντων τὸν ἕνα θεὸν ἐμφαίνειν, καὶ διὰ τῶν πολυτρόπων  
δυνάμεων τὴν μίαν αὐτοῦ παριστάναι δύναμιν· διὸ καὶ φησιν αὐτὸν ἕνα  
[254] εἶναι | καὶ τὸν αὐτόν, τὰς δὲ διαμείφεις τῆς μορφῆς καὶ τοὺς μετασχη- 1  
ματισμοὺς ἐν τοῖς δεχομένοις ὑποτίθεται. Διόπερ κατὰ ζῴδιον καὶ καθ'  
ὥραν μεταβάλλεσθαι αὐτόν φησιν, ὥς ἐκείνων διαποικιλλομένων περὶ τὸν  
θεὸν κατὰ τὰς πολλὰς αὐτοῦ ὑποδοχάς. Τοιαύταις εὐχαῖς Αἰγύπτιοι πρὸς  
ἥλιον χρῶνται οὐκ ἐν ταῖς αὐτοψίαις μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν ταῖς κοινοτέραις 5

[252].12 πρύμνης M: πρήμνης V || [253].12 διδαχὴ cj. Parthey Hopf-  
ner: διαδοχὴ VM || 13 ἐμφαίνειν M: ἐμβαίνειν V || [254].4 αὐτοῦ cj. Gale:  
ἑαυτοῦ VM || 4-5 πρὸς ἥλιον M: om. V || 5 κοινοτέραις cj. Boulliau i. m.  
U: καινοτέραις VM

Just as the helmsman presides over the ship while taking charge of its rudder, so the sun is transcendently in charge of the helm of the whole world. And as the helmsman controls everything from on high at the stern, giving out a minimal first impulse from himself, so in the same way, but more significantly, the god from on high gives out, indivisibly, from the first principles of nature, the primordial causes of movement. These things, therefore, and more besides, are indicated by the his “sailing in a ship.”<sup>387</sup>

**3** Since, then, every portion of the heavens, every sign of the zodiac, all the heavenly motions, and all time, according to which the cosmos is moved, and all things in the universe receive the potencies emanating from the sun, some of which are immanent in these, while others remain transcendent from commixture with them, the symbolic method of signification represents these as well: it indicates through words the change in shape according to the signs of the zodiac and the change in forms by the hour, but it also indicates his immutable, stable, unfailing, and, at the same time, complete gift to the whole universe at once. But since the recipients cope in various ways with the indivisible gift of the god, and receive variable powers from the sun, according to their own particular motions, so the symbolic doctrine aims to hit upon the One God through a multitude of gifts, and represents his one potency through its own many and various potencies. Wherefore the teaching indicates that he is actually one and the same, but allots to his recipients a variety of form and changing configurations. Hence it indicates that he is changed, according to the zodiac, every hour, just as these are changed around the god, according to the many modes of receiving him. Hence the prayers that the Egyptians address to the sun, not only at the autopsies but also in

god’s authority; the god sailed across the sky in his barque. The image of the helmsman is, of course, also Platonic: *Phaedr.* 247c; *Pol.* 272e.

<sup>387</sup> Cf. Plotinus’s account of Egyptian symbolism at *Enn.* 5.8.6: “the wise men of Egypt, I think, also understood this, either by scientific or innate knowledge, and when they wished to signify something wisely, did not use the form of letters which follow the order of words and propositions and imitate sounds and the enunciations of philosophical statements, but by drawing images and inscribing in their temples one particular image of each particular thing, they manifested the non-discursiveness of the intelligible world, that is, that every image is a kind of knowledge and wisdom and is a subject of statements, all together in one, and not discourse or deliberation” (trans. Armstrong, LCL).

εὐχαῖς, αἵτινες ἔχουσι τοιοῦτον νοῦν καὶ κατὰ τοιαύτην συμβολικὴν μυσταγωγίαν τῷ θεῷ προσφέρονται· διόπερ οὐδ' ἂν ἔχοι τινὰ λόγον, εἴ τις αὐτῶν προσάγοιτο ἀντίληψις.

4 Ἄ δ' ἐστὶ τούτων ἐχόμενα ἐρωτήματα πλείονος μὲν δεῖται διδασκαλίας, εἴ τις ἱκανῶς ἐπεξίῃ τῷ λόγῳ· δεῖ δ' ὁμῶς ἐν ἀποκρισεὶ διὰ βρα- 10  
χέων τάληθές πη περὶ αὐτῶν διαπερανθῆναι. Τί γὰρ βούλεται τὰ ἄσημα ὀνόματα πυνθάνη· τὰ δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄσημα, ὃ σὺ νενόμικας· ἀλλ' ἡμῖν μὲν ἄγνωστα ἔστω ἢ καὶ γνωστὰ ἔνια, περὶ ὧν παρεδεξάμεθα τὰς ἀναλύσεις  
[255] παρὰ θεῶν, τοῖς μέντοι θεοῖς | πάντα σημαντικά ἐστιν οὐ κατὰ ῥητὸν 1  
τρόπον, οὐδ' οἷός ἐστιν ὁ διὰ τῶν φαντασιῶν παρ' ἀνθρώποις σημαντικός τε καὶ μνηντικός, ἀλλ' ἦτοι νοεῶς [κατὰ τὸν θεῖον αὐτὸν ἀνθρώπειον νοῦν] ἢ καὶ ἀφθέγκτως καὶ κρειττόνως καὶ ἀπλουστέρως [καὶ] κατὰ νοῦν 5  
τοῖς θεοῖς συνηνωμένος· ἀφαιρεῖν μὲν οὖν χρὴ πάσας ἐπινοίας καὶ λογικὰς διεξόδους ἀπὸ τῶν θείων ὀνομάτων, ἀφαιρεῖν δὲ καὶ τὰς συμφυομένας τῆς φωνῆς πρὸς τὰ ἐν τῇ φύσει πράγματα φυσικὰς ἀπεικασίας. Ὅσπερ δὲ ἐστὶ νοερός καὶ θεῖος τῆς θείας ὁμοιότητος συμβολικός χαρακτήρ, τοῦτον ὑποθετόν ἐν τοῖς ὀνόμασιν. Καὶ δὴ καὶ ἄγνωστος ἡμῖν ὑπάρχει, αὐτὸ 10  
τοῦτό ἐστιν αὐτοῦ τὸ σεμνότατον· κρείττων γάρ ἐστιν ἢ ὥστε διαιρεῖσθαι 10  
εἰς γνώσιν. Ἐφ' ὧν γε μὴν παρειλήφαμεν τὴν ἐπιστήμην τῆς ἀναλύσεως, ἐπὶ τούτων τῆς θείας οὐσίας καὶ δυνάμεως καὶ τάξεως ἔχομεν ὅλης ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τὴν εἰδήσιν. Καὶ ἔτι ἀθρόαν τὴν μυστικὴν καὶ ἀπόρρητον εἰκόνα  
[256] | τῶν θεῶν ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ διαφυλάττομεν, καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν δι' αὐτῶν ἀνάγομεν 1  
ἐπὶ τοὺς θεοὺς, καὶ ἀναχθεῖσαν κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν τοῖς θεοῖς συνάπτομεν.  
Ἄλλὰ διὰ τί τῶν σημαντικῶν τὰ βάρβαρα πρὸ τῶν ἐκάστῳ οἰκείων προτιμῶμεν; ἔστι δὲ καὶ τούτου μυστικός ὁ λόγος. Διότι γὰρ τῶν ἱερῶν 5  
ἔθνων, ὥσπερ Ἀσσυρίων τε καὶ Αἰγυπτίων, οἱ θεοὶ τὴν ὅλην διάλεκτον 5  
ἱεροπρεπῆ κατέδειξαν, διὰ τοῦτο καὶ τὰς κοινολογίας οἰόμεθα δεῖν τῇ 5  
συγγενεῖ πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς λέξει προσφέρειν, καὶ διότι πρῶτος καὶ παλαιότερός ἐστιν ὁ τοιοῦτος τρόπος τῆς φωνῆς, καὶ μάλιστα ἐπειδὴ οἱ μαθόντες τὰ πρῶτα ὀνόματα περὶ τῶν θεῶν μετὰ τῆς οἰκείας γλώττης

[254].7 ἔχοι V: ἔχη M || 8 προσάγοιτο VM: προσαγάγοιτο cj. B ||  
10 διδασκαλίας cj. Gale Hopfner: διὰδοχῆς VM || 12 δ ] an ὥς? (sed cf. 293, 7)  
|| 13 καὶ V: om. M || 14 παρὰ cj. Gale: περὶ VM || [255].3-4 κατὰ — νοῦν  
secl. cj. Saffrey || 4 καὶ κρειττόνως V: ἢ κρειττόνως M | [καὶ] nos || 5  
συνηνωμένος VM: συνηνωμένον (tert. v s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 7 ὅσπερ cj. Gale: ὥσπερ  
VM || 10 αὐτοῦ V: αὐτῆς M || [256].5 ἐθνῶν V: θεῶν M

more common prayers, are all of the sort that have such a meaning, and are offered to the god in accordance with such a symbolic mystical doctrine. Hence, there is no point in presenting a critique of them.

4 The questions that follow next require a more thorough explanation, if we are to explain them with sufficient logic, and yet for these also we must set out the truths in our response with brevity. For you inquire, “what is the point of meaningless names?” But they are not “meaningless” in the way that you think. Rather, let us grant that they are unknowable to us—or even, in some cases, known, since we may receive their explanations from the gods—but to the gods they are all significant, not according to an effable mode, nor in such a way that is significant and indicative to the imaginations of human beings, but united to the gods either intellectually<sup>388</sup> or rather ineffably, and in a manner superior and more simple than in accordance with intellect. It is essential, therefore, to remove all considerations of logic from the names of the gods, and to set aside the natural representations of the spoken word to the physical things that exist in nature. Thus, the symbolic character of divine similitude, which is intellectual and divine, has to be assumed in the names. And indeed, if it is unknowable to us, this very fact is its most sacred aspect: for it is too excellent to be divided into knowledge. But as for those names of which we have acquired a scientific analysis, through these we have knowledge of divine being, and power, and order, all in a name! And, moreover, we preserve in their entirety the mystical and arcane images of the gods in our soul; and we raise our soul up through these towards the gods and, as far as is possible, when it has been elevated, we experience union with the gods.

But “why, of meaningful names, do we prefer the barbarian to our own?” For this, again, there is a mystical reason. For, since the gods have shown that the entire dialect of the sacred peoples such as the Assyrians and the Egyptians is appropriate for religious ceremonies, for this reason we must understand that our communication with the gods should be in an appropriate tongue. Also, such a mode of speech is the first and the most ancient. But most importantly, since those who learned the very first names

<sup>388</sup> We accept Saffrey’s excision of *κατὰ τὸν θεῖον αὐτὸν ἀνθρώπειον νοῦν* here.

αὐτὰ συμμίζαντες παραδεδώκασιν ἡμῖν, ὥς οἰκείας καὶ προσφόρου πρὸς 10  
αὐτὰ ὑπαρχούσης, ἀκίνητον διατηροῦμεν δεῦρο ἀεὶ τὸν θεσμόν τῆς παρα-  
δόσεως. Ἐπεὶ γάρ τι τοῖς θεοῖς ἄλλο προσήκει, δηλονότι καὶ τὸ ἀίδιον  
καὶ ἀμετάβλητον αὐτοῖς ἐστὶ συγγενές.

[257] | 5 Ἄλλ' ὁ ἀκούων, φῆς, πρὸς τὰ σημαινόμενα ἀφορᾷ, ὥστε 1  
αὐτάρκης ἢ αὐτῇ μένουσα ἔννοια, καὶ ὅποιον οὖν ὑπάρχει τοῦνομα. Τὸ δ'  
οὐ τοιοῦτόν ἐστιν οἶον σὺν προσεδόκησας· εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἦν κατὰ συνθήκην  
κείμενα τὰ ὀνόματα, οὐδὲν διέφερε τὰ ἕτερα ἀντὶ τῶν ἐτέρων μεταλαμβά-  
νειν· εἰ δὲ τῇ φύσει συνήρηται τῶν ὄντων, τὰ μᾶλλον αὐτῇ προσεικίτα 5  
καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς ἐστὶ δῆπου προσφιλέστερα· ἐκ δὲ τοῦδε καταφαίνεται ὥς  
εὐλόγως καὶ ἡ τῶν ἱερῶν ἔθνων προκέκριται φωνὴ πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρώ-  
πων· οὐδὲ γὰρ πάντως τὴν αὐτὴν διασώζει διάνοιαν μεθερμηνεύμενα τὰ  
ὀνόματα, ἀλλ' ἐστὶ τινὰ καθ' ἕκαστον ἔθνος ἰδιώματα, ἀδύνατα εἰς ἄλλο  
ἔθνος διὰ φωνῆς σημαίνεσθαι· ἔπειτα καὶ εἰ οἶόν τε αὐτὰ μεθερμηνεύειν, 10  
ἀλλὰ τὴν γε δύναμιν οὐκέτι φυλάττει τὴν αὐτήν· ἔχει δὲ καὶ τὰ βάρβαρα  
ὀνόματα πολλὴν μὲν ἔμφασιν πολλὴν δὲ συντομίαν, ἀμφιβολίας τε ἐλάτ-  
τονος μετέσχηκε καὶ ποικιλίας καὶ τοῦ πλήθους τῶν λέξεων· διὰ πάντα  
δὴ οὖν ταῦτα συναρμόζει τοῖς κρείττοσιν.

[256].13 συγγενές (α p. n., συγ i. m.) V<sup>r</sup>: ἀγενές VM || [257].6 ἐστι  
VM: ἔσται cj. BU

of the gods merged them with their own familiar tongue and delivered them to us, as being proper and adapted to these things, forever we preserve here the unshakeable law of tradition. For, whatever else pertains to the gods, it is clear that the eternal and the immutable is connatural with them.

5 “But,” so you say, “a listener looks to the meaning, so surely all that matters is that the conception remains the same, whatever the kind of words used.” But the situation is not as you suppose. For if the names were established by convention, then it would not matter whether some were used instead of others. But if they are dependent on the nature of real beings, then those that are better adapted to this will be more precious to the gods. It is therefore evident from this that the language of sacred peoples is preferred to that of other men, and with good reason. For the names do not exactly preserve the same meaning when they are translated; rather, there are certain idioms in every nation that are impossible to express in the language of another. Moreover, even if one were to translate them, this would not preserve their same power.<sup>389</sup> For the barbarian names possess weightiness and great precision, participating in less ambiguity, variability and multiplicity of expression. For all these reasons, then, they are adapted to the superior beings.

<sup>389</sup> When translation *was* performed, we may note, it required the active assistance of the priestly guardians of the originals; see *Myst.* VIII.5 and X.7 on the Egyptian priest-translator Bitys and cf. Fowden (1986, 30) for discussion. Porphyry, as is apparent here, held a very different view of language, seeing it as an agreed set of representative noises, and arguing even that we might understand animals if only we could learn and translate their language. See *Abst.* III.15.2; III.3.3–5 Clark. Porphyry’s view is represented at *Corp. herm.* 12.13: “humanity is one and therefore speech is also one: when translated, it is found to be the same in Egypt and Persia as in Greece.” The debate as to whether words are natural or conventional originated in Plato’s *Cratylus* and was developed by the Stoics, who influenced the later Neoplatonic approach. Proclus, *Comm. Crat.* 32.5–12 argues that various languages can represent a single divine essence, and Greek is included in his list of languages containing divine names. Proclus, *Comm. Tim.* 1.99.5 argues that the positing of a name is a form of creation, thereby associating the process of naming with divine intellection or the actions of the demiurge.

[258] | Ἄνελε οὖν ἐκ μέσων τὰς ἀποπιπτούσας τῆς ἀληθείας ὑπονοίας, 1  
 ἢ ὡς Αἰγύπτιος ἢ αἰγυπτία φωνῇ χρώμενός ἐστιν ὁ καλούμενος· ἀλλὰ  
 μᾶλλον ἐκεῖνο ὑπολάμβανε, ὡς Αἰγυπτίων πρώτων τὴν μετουσίαν τῶν  
 θεῶν διακληρωσαμένων, καὶ οἱ θεοὶ χαίρουσι τοῖς Αἰγυπτίων θεσμοῖς  
 καλούμενοι· οὐδ' αὖ γοήτων ἐστὶ ταῦτα πάντα τεχνάσματα· πῶς γὰρ ἂν 5  
 τὰ μάλιστα συννηγμένα τοῖς θεοῖς καὶ ἡμᾶς πρὸς αὐτοὺς συνάπτοντα καὶ  
 μόνον οὐχὶ τὰς ἴσας δυνάμεις ἔχοντα τοῖς κρείττοσι, φανταστικά ἂν εἴη  
 πλάσματα, ὧν χωρὶς οὐδὲν ἱερατικὸν ἔργον γίνεταί· ἀλλ' οὐδὲ προκα-  
 λύμματα ταῦτα διὰ τῶν ἐπιφημιζομένων τῷ θεῷ τῶν περὶ ἡμᾶς γίνεταί  
 παθῶν. Οὐ γὰρ ἀφ' ὧν ἂν ἡμεῖς πάθωμεν, τοῦναντίον δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν οἰκείων 10  
 τοῖς θεοῖς ὀρμώμενοι τὰς προσφόρους αὐτοῖς λέξεις κατὰ φύσιν προσφέ-  
 ρομεν· οὐδ' ἐναντίας ποιούμεθα περὶ τοῦ θείου τὰς ἐννοίας ἢ αὐτὸ τῷ ὄντι  
 διάκειται· ἀλλ' ἥπερ ἔχει φύσεως, καὶ ὡς τετυχήκασιν τῆς περὶ αὐτοῦ ἀλη-  
 θείας οἱ πρῶτοι καταστησάμενοι τοὺς νόμους τῆς ἱεροῦς ἀγιστείας, οὕτως  
 [259] ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐμμένονεν· εἴπερ γὰρ τι τῶν ἄλλων τῶν ἱερο|πρεπῶς νομίων, 1  
 καὶ τὸ ἀμετάπτωτον αὐτοῖς συναρμόζει· καὶ δεῖ τὰ τῶν παλαιῶν εὐχῶν,  
 ὥσπερ ἱερὰ ἄστυλα, τηρεῖσθαι κατὰ τὰ αὐτὰ καὶ ὡσαύτως, μήτε ἀφαιροῦν-  
 τάς τι ἀπ' αὐτῶν μήτε προστιθέντας τι αὐταῖς ἀλλαχόθεν. Σχεδὸν γὰρ καὶ  
 τοῦτο αἴτιον νυνὶ γέγονε τοῦ πάντα ἐξίτηλα καθεστηκέναι καὶ τὰ ὀνόμα- 5  
 τα καὶ τὰ τῶν εὐχῶν, διότι μεταβαλλόμενα αἰεὶ διὰ τὴν καινοτομίαν καὶ  
 παρανομίαν τῶν Ἑλλήνων οὐδὲν παύεται. Φύσει γὰρ Ἑλληνές εἰσι νεω-  
 τεροποιοὶ καὶ ἄττοντες φέρονται πανταχῇ, οὐδὲν ἔχοντες ἔρμα ἐν ἑαυτοῖς·  
 οὐδ' ὅπερ ἂν δέξωνται παρὰ τινων διαφυλάττοντες, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦτο ὀξέως  
 ἀφιέντες, πάντα κατὰ τὴν ἄστατον εὐρεσιλογίαν μεταπλάττουσιν· βάρ- 10  
 βαροι δέ, μόνιμοι τοῖς ἡθεσιν ὄντες, καὶ τοῖς λόγοις βεβαίως τοῖς αὐτοῖς

[258].5 οὐδ' fec. V<sup>2</sup>: οἱ δ' VM εἰ δ' cj. B | γὰρ del. cj. B || 11  
 προσφόρους M: προσφοράς V || [259].8 ἄττοντες M: ἄττονες V

So forget these conjectures, which fall short of the truth, "whether he who is invoked is either an Egyptian, or uses Egyptian speech."<sup>390</sup> Far better to understand this: that since the Egyptians were the first to be granted participation with gods, the gods when invoked rejoice in the rites of the Egyptians.<sup>391</sup> It is not, then, that "all these things are sorcerers's tricks." For how could things most especially linked with the gods, which join us to them, and which possess powers all but equal to theirs, be "imaginary forgeries" when no sacred work could happen without them? But neither are "these arcane devices created through our own passions, and attributed to the divine." For we do not proceed on the basis of our sentiments, but, on the contrary, we take our cue from things allied with the gods, and convey declarations fitting to them according to their nature. And neither do we "make up conceptions about the divine which go against their true existence," but rather in line with the nature it possesses, and according to the truth which those who first laid down the laws of the sacred cult established, in this way do we preserve them—for even if any aspect of the rest of the sacred laws is proper to them, it is surely immutability. And it is necessary that the prayers of the ancients, like sacred places of sanctuary, are preserved ever the same and in the same manner, with nothing of alternative origin either removed from or added to them. For this is the reason why all these things in place at the present time have lost their power, both the names and the prayers: because they are endlessly altered according to the inventiveness and illegality of the Hellenes. For the Hellenes are experimental by nature, and eagerly propelled in all directions, having no proper ballast in them; and they preserve nothing which they have received from anyone else, but even this they promptly abandon and change it all according to their unreliable linguistic innovation.<sup>392</sup> But

<sup>390</sup> This is surely a quotation from Porphyry, and a particularly sarcastic comment on his part. Sodano (1958) at Porphyry, *Aneb.* 2.10a5–6 takes it as such.

<sup>391</sup> Cf. *PGM* III. 120 where the injunction declares, "I conjure you in the Hebrew tongue." The magical papyri are, of course, filled with seemingly meaningless injunctions and lists of names.

<sup>392</sup> This view of the Greek language is expressed in *Corp. herm.* 16.2. "Abamon" criticises the Hellenes at *Myst.* VIII.3.263.11–264.1 for their limited grasp of the divine Ammon's role, which leads them to name him after



ἐμμένουσιν· διόπερ αὐτοί τέ εἰσι προσφιλεῖς τοῖς θεοῖς καὶ τοὺς λόγους  
αὐτοῖς προσφέρουσι κεχαρισμένους· διαμείβειν τε αὐτοὺς κατ' οὐδένα τρό-  
πον οὐδενὶ ἀνθρώπῳ θεμιτόν ἐστιν. Τοιαῦτα καὶ περὶ τῶν ὀνομάτων τῶν  
[260] τε | ἀφθέγκτων καὶ τῶν βαρβάρων μὲν καλουμένων ἱεροπρεπῶν δὲ ὄντων ἰ  
πρὸς σὲ ἀποκρινόμεθα.

the barbarians, being constant in their customs, remain faithful to the same words. Thus they endear themselves to the gods, and proffer words that are pleasing to them. To change these in any way whatsoever is permitted to no man.<sup>393</sup> Such, then, is our answer to you concerning the names, which may indeed be called “inexplicable” and “barbarous,” but which are in fact wholly suitable for sacred rituals.

Hephaestos. Cf. also Iamblichus, *Comm. Tim.* frg. 11 Dillon; Plato, *Leg.* 656d–657a; *Euthyd.* 2a1; *Prot.* 310b5.

<sup>393</sup> The injunction not to alter the barbarian names may be found at *Orac. chald.* frg. 150 and *Corp. herm.* 16.2. See also *PGM* IV. 3172; VII. 703–726; XII. 121–143 and 190–192; Origen, *Cels.* 1.6; 1.24–25; 4.33–34; 5.45; *Philoc.* 12; Damascius, *Comm. Phileb.* 24 Westerink (on Plato, *Phileb.* 12c); Proclus, *Comm. Parm.* 851.8; *Theol. plat.* 1.44.

## VIII

1 Τούτων δὲ ἀποστάς, ὡς φήης, βούλει σοι δηλωθῆναι τί τὸ πρῶτον αἴτιον ἡγοῦνται εἶναι Αἰγύπτιοι, πότερον νοῦν ἢ ὑπὲρ νοῦν, καὶ μόνον ἢ μετ' ἄλλον ἢ ἄλλων, καὶ πότερον ἀσώματον ἢ σωματικόν, καὶ εἰ τῷ 5 δημιουργῷ τὰ αὐτὰ ἢ πρὸ τοῦ δημιουργοῦ, καὶ εἰ ἐξ ἑνὸς τὰ πάντα ἢ ἐκ πολλῶν, καὶ εἰ ὕλην ἴσασιν ἢ σώματα ποιά πρῶτα, καὶ ἀγέννητον ὕλην ἢ γεννητήν.

Ἐγὼ δέ σοι πρῶτον ἐρῶ τὴν αἰτίαν δι' ἣν ἔν τε γράμμασι τῶν ἀρχαίων ἱερογραμματέων πολλαὶ καὶ ποικίλαι δόξαι περὶ τούτων φέρον- 10 ται, καὶ παρὰ τοῖς ἔτι ζῶσι τῶν σοφῶν τὰ μεγάλα οὐχ ἀπλῶς ὁ λόγος παραδίδοται. Λέγω δὴ οὖν ὡς πολλῶν οὐσιῶν ὑπαρχουσῶν καὶ τούτων διαφερουσῶν ἀμπληθες, πολλαὶ παρεδόθησαν αὐτῶν καὶ ἀρχαὶ διαφο- ρους ἔχουσαι τάξεις, ἄλλαι παρ' ἄλλοις τῶν παλαιῶν ἱερέων· τὰς μὲν οὖν [261] ὅλας Ἐρμῆς ἐν ταῖς δις|μυρίαῖς βίβλοις, ὡς Σέλευκος ἀπεγράφατο, ἢ ταῖς 1

[260].6 τὰ αὐτὰ ] τὸ αὐτὸ cj. Scott || 7 σώματα ποιά VM: σωματοποιιά cj. B || 11 παρὰ cj. Gale: περὶ VM || 13-14 διαφορους (ου s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: διαφορώς VM || [261].1 ὡς ] & cj. Scott

## BOOK VIII

1 Leaving that topic behind, then, as you say, you wish it to be made clear to you “what the Egyptians consider to be the first cause, whether it is an intellect, or beyond intellect, alone or associated with another or others, and whether it is incorporeal or corporeal, and if it is the same as the creator god or prior to him;<sup>394</sup> and if everything derives from one being or from many; and if they recognise matter, or alternatively a certain number of primary bodies, and if so, how many; and whether matter is un-created or created.”<sup>395</sup>

I will tell you first the reason why, in the writings of the sacred scribes of old, there circulate many and various opinions on these questions, and why among those of the sages who are still living<sup>396</sup> there is no uniformity of doctrine on the major issues. What I have to say, then, is the following: since there are many types of being, and these exhibit great variety, tradition has handed down a great many first principles of them, covering a considerable range of levels, varying according to the reports of the different ancient priests. The whole gamut, however, has been covered by Hermes in the twenty thousand books, according to

<sup>394</sup> That is to say, the Demiurge of Plato’s *Timaeus*, who could be regarded, in Middle Platonic circles at least, as being either the primary divinity, identical with the Good or the One, or a secondary god, inferior to these latter entities (as he was, for instance, by Numenius).

<sup>395</sup> Porphyry is here raising all the basic Platonist questions about first principles.

<sup>396</sup> Who are these, one might ask? “Abamon” may archly be referring to his distinguished contemporary, the Syrian philosopher and theurgist Iamblichus, among others!

τρισμυρίας τε καὶ ἑξακισχιλίας καὶ πεντακοσίας καὶ εἴκοσι πέντε, ὡς  
Μανεθῶς ἱστορεῖ, τελέως ἀνέδειξεν. Τὰς δ' ἐπὶ τῶν κατὰ μέρος οὐσιῶν  
ἄλλοι ἄλλας διαβάλλοντες τῶν παλαιῶν πολλαχοῦ διερμηνεύουσιν. Δεῖ δὲ  
τάληθές περὶ πασῶν ἀνευρεθῆναι, συντόμως τε αὐτό σοι κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν 5  
διερμηνεῦσαι. Καὶ πρῶτον μὲν ὁ πρῶτον ἡρώτησας περὶ τούτου ἄκουε.

2 Πρὸ τῶν ὄντως ὄντων καὶ τῶν ὅλων ἀρχῶν ἐστὶ θεὸς εἷς,  
πρώτιστος καὶ τοῦ πρώτου θεοῦ καὶ βασιλέως, ἀκίνητος ἐν μονότητι τῆς  
ἐαυτοῦ ἐνότητος μένων. Οὔτε γὰρ νοητὸν αὐτῷ ἐπιπλέκεται οὔτε ἄλλο  
τι· παράδειγμα δὲ ἴδρται τοῦ αὐτοπάτορος αὐτογόνου καὶ μονοπάτο- 10  
[262] ρος θεοῦ τοῦ ὄντως ἀγαθοῦ· μείζον γάρ τι καὶ πρῶτον καὶ | πηγὴ τῶν 1

[261].3 Μανεθῶς M : Μενεθῶς V || 4 διαβάλλοντες VM : διαλαβόντες  
cj. Gale (cf. 264, 7-8) | δὲ M: δὴ V || 8 πρώτιστος scripsi: πρώτιος VM  
πρώτερος (sic) i. m. V<sup>2</sup> προαίτιος cj. Scott

the account of Seleucus,<sup>397</sup> or in the thirty-six thousand, five hundred and twenty-five,<sup>398</sup> as Manetho<sup>399</sup> reports. As for the first principles of particular substances, various of the ancients, in dispute with each other, have given many different interpretations. But it is necessary to uncover the truth about all these things, and to unfold them to you as far as is possible. First of all, hear what I have to say about your first subject of enquiry.

2 Prior to the true beings and to the universal principles there is the one god, prior cause<sup>400</sup> even of the first god and king, remaining unmoved in the singularity of his own unity.<sup>401</sup> For no object of intellection is linked to him, nor anything else. He is established as a paradigm for the self-fathering, self-generating and only-fathered God who is true Good; for it is something greater,

<sup>397</sup> There are two candidates here, neither of them by any means certain: (1) Seleucus of Alexandria (*FGH* 341), a grammarian who lived at Rome under Augustus and Tiberius (Suetonius, *Tib.* 56); and (2) Seleucus of Babylon, a scientist and astronomer, who lived in Alexandria at around 200 B.C.E. The former is credited by the *Suda* with a book *On the Gods*, while the second, as an astronomer and astrologer, might be supposed to take an interest in books by Hermes. In fact, however, in neither case are there very strong grounds for identification. As for the twenty thousand books of Hermes, there is doubtless a reference here to some of what we know as the *Corpus Hermeticum*, though no very clear identifications can be made.

<sup>398</sup> Presumably also “books of Hermes.” How these vast numbers were arrived at is mysterious, but one might reflect that if, as seems to be the case, Egyptian priests were prone to attribute all their works to Hermes (i.e. Thoth, cf. I.1 and note ad loc.), then this total would be no more than the contents of a substantial temple library.

<sup>399</sup> Manetho is presumably to be identified with the well-known Egyptian priest who composed, under Ptolemy Philadelphus (285–247 B.C.E.), a history of ancient Egypt which still survives in summary, but there is no such mention in his surviving works.

<sup>400</sup> There is a textual problem here. The MSS have *πρώτιος*, which is a non-word. Des Places emends this to *πρώτιστος*, which does not commend itself as good Greek. Scott (1936) proposes *προαίτιος*, which is more adventurous, but more likely to be right, if we suppose a scribe to have indulged in contraction of the *o* and the *α*. That, at any rate, is what we translate.

<sup>401</sup> In terms of Iamblichean metaphysics, this should be the first One, or Totally Ineffable, see Dillon (1973, 29–33), and the “first god and king,” the second One which presides over the triad (identified here, allusively with the “king of all” of the second Platonic Letter (312e), but this may be pressing the text too far. The alternative would be that this is simply the One, and the second entity the One-Being, or monad of the intelligible world.

πάντων καὶ πνυθμῆν τῶν νοουμένων πρώτων ἰδεῶν ὄντων. Ἀπὸ δὲ τοῦ  
 ἑνὸς τούτου ὁ αὐτάρχης θεὸς ἑαυτὸν ἐξέλαμψε, διὸ καὶ αὐτοπάτωρ καὶ  
 αὐτάρχης· ἀρχὴ γὰρ οὗτος καὶ θεὸς θεῶν, μονὰς ἐκ τοῦ ἑνός, προσούσιος  
 καὶ ἀρχὴ τῆς οὐσίας. Ἀπ' αὐτοῦ γὰρ ἡ οὐσιότης καὶ ἡ οὐσία, διὸ καὶ 5  
 οὐσιοπάτωρ καλεῖται· αὐτὸς γὰρ τὸ προόντως ὄν ἐστι, τῶν νοητῶν ἀρχή,  
 διὸ καὶ νοητάρχης προσαγορεύεται. Αὔται μὲν οὖν εἰσιν ἀρχαὶ πρεσβύτα-  
 ται πάντων, ἃς Ἐρμῆς πρὸ τῶν αἰθερίων καὶ ἐμπυρίων θεῶν προτάττει  
 καὶ τῶν ἐπουρανίων· ἑκατὸν μὲν περὶ τῆς ἱστορίας τῶν ἐμπυρίων καὶ ἰσ-  
 ἀριθμα τούτοις περὶ τῶν αἰθερίων συγγράμματα παραδούς, χίλια δὲ περὶ 10  
 τῶν ἐπουρανίων.

[263] **3** Κατ' ἄλλην δὲ τάξιν προτάττει θεὸν τὸν Ἡμῆφ τῶν | ἐπου- 1  
 ρανίων θεῶν ἡγούμενον, ὃν φησι νοῦν εἶναι αὐτὸν ἑαυτὸν νοοῦντα καὶ  
 τὰς νοήσεις εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἐπιστρέφοντα· τούτου δὲ τὸ ἐν ἁμερὲς καὶ ὃ φησι

[262].2 πρώτων ] πρὸ τῶν cj. Scott | ὄντων ] ὦν cj. Scott | δὲ V: δὴ  
 M || 3 αὐτάρχης VM: αὐτάρχης cj. B || 12 προτάττει cj. Boulliau i. m. U:  
 προστάττει VM | Ἡμῆφ ] Κμῆφ scr. Scott

and primary, and fount of all things, and basic root<sup>402</sup> of all the first objects of intellection, which are the forms. From this One there has autonomously<sup>403</sup> shone forth the self-sufficient god, for which reason he is termed “father of himself” and “principle of himself”; for he is first principle and god of gods, a monad springing from the One, pre-essential and first principle of essence. For from him springs essentiality<sup>404</sup> and essence, for which reason he is termed “father of essence”; he himself is pre-essential being, the first principle of the intelligible realm, for which reason he is termed “principle of intellection.”<sup>405</sup> These, then, are the most senior principles of all, which Hermes ranks as prior to the aetherial and empyrean gods, and to the celestial ones;<sup>406</sup> he has handed down, at any rate, a hundred treatises giving an account of the empyrean gods and a number equal to this about the aetherial ones, and a thousand about the celestial ones.

**3** Following another system of ordering, he gives the first rank to Kmeph,<sup>407</sup> the leader of the celestial gods, whom he declares to be an intellect thinking himself, and turning his thoughts

<sup>402</sup> *πυθμήν* may mean “base,” or “root” in the mathematical sense.

<sup>403</sup> An attempt to give due weight to the expression *ἐαυτὸν ἐξέλαμψε*, lit. “shone himself forth.”

<sup>404</sup> For *οὐσιότης* in this sense, that is to say, the precondition of essence, cf. Alcinoüs, *Didaskalikos* 10.164.34 H, and its occurrences in Hermetic and Gnostic texts (*Corp. herm.* 12.1; 12.22; frg. 16.1; 21.1 N–F).

<sup>405</sup> All these epithets and descriptions are consistent with the situation of the One-Being, the first principle or monad of the intelligible realm (which is also the lowest principle of the henadic realm) in Iamblichus’s system. Cf. Dillon (1973, 33–35). *νοητάρχης* may be a neologism of Iamblichus, though he seems here to attribute it, like the rest of the jargon with which this section is replete, to “the books of Hermes.”

<sup>406</sup> All these levels of god would seem to be immanent in the cosmos.

<sup>407</sup> The MSS reading Emeph (*Ἑμήφ*) bears no relation to the name or epithet of any known Egyptian god. Scott (1936) proposed to emend it to Kmeph (*Κμηφ*)—building on Thomas Gale, who had suggested Kneph (*Κνηφ*)—which is at least a deity known to the Greek tradition as the primal cosmic serpent, with his tail in his mouth, such as would accord well with the idea of a self-thinking intellect (e.g. Plutarch, *Is. Os.* 359d; Porphyry, frg. 360.3 Smith). To preserve the reading of the MSS in these circumstances is to convict “Abamon” of mindlessness (he must have known of Kmeph) and it is far more likely a scribal error. For Kmeph the Egyptian serpent-god see *PGM* III. 142; IV. 135–140; IV. 1705.



πρῶτον μαίευμα προτάττει, ὃν καὶ Εἰκτῶν ἐπονομάζει· ἐν ᾧ δὴ τὸ πρῶτόν  
 ἐστὶ νοοῦν καὶ τὸ πρῶτον νοητόν, ὃ δὴ καὶ διὰ σιγῆς μόνης θεραπεύεται. 5  
 Ἐπὶ δὲ τούτοις τῶν ἐμφανῶν δημιουργίας ἄλλοι προσστήκασιν ἡγεμόνες.  
 Ὁ γὰρ δημιουργικὸς νοῦς καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας προστάτης καὶ σοφίας, ἐρ-  
 χόμενος μὲν ἐπὶ γένεσιν, καὶ τὴν ἀφανῆ τῶν κεκρυμμένων λόγων δύναμιν  
 εἰς φῶς ἄγων, Ἀμοῦν κατὰ τὴν τῶν Αἰγυπτίων γλῶσσαν λέγεται, συντε-  
 λῶν δὲ ἀψευδῶς ἕκαστα καὶ τεχνικῶς μετ' ἀληθείας Φθὰ ("Ελληνες δὲ εἰς 10  
 [264] Ἡφαῖστον μεταλαμβάνουσι τὸν Φθὰ τῷ τεχνικῷ μόνον προσβάλλοντες), 1

[263].4 μαίευμα cj. Gale: μάγευμα VM παράδειγμα cj. Ficinus || 5  
 νοοῦν cj. Gale: νοῦν VM || 7 σοφίας (alt. σ add.) V<sup>1</sup>: σοφία VM || 9 Ἀμοῦν  
 scr. Parthey: Ἀμοῦν VM || 10 Φθὰ s. v. V<sup>2</sup>: om. VM

towards himself;<sup>408</sup> but prior to him he places the indivisible One and what he calls the “first product,”<sup>409</sup> which he also calls Ikton.<sup>410</sup> It is in him that there resides the primal intelligising element and the primal object of intellection,<sup>411</sup> which, it must be specified, is worshipped by means of silence alone.<sup>412</sup> In addition to these, other rulers have been set over the creation of the visible realm. For the demiurgic intellect, who is master of truth and wisdom, when he comes to create and brings into the light the invisible power of the hidden reason-principles,<sup>413</sup> is called Amoun in the Egyptian tongue,<sup>414</sup> when he infallibly and expertly brings to perfection each thing in accordance with truth he is termed Ptah<sup>415</sup> (the Greeks translate Ptah as Hephaistos, concentrating

<sup>408</sup> On the model of Aristotle’s first principle, the Unmoved Mover of *Metaphysics* 12.

<sup>409</sup> The reading of the MSS here is *μάγεμμα*, which has no very clear meaning. Gale conjectured *μάξιμμα*, which does have some meaning, but would seem to imply that this deity is not a first principle, but a product. It sounds as if Hermes is translating some Egyptian term.

<sup>410</sup> At any rate, Ikton would seem to correspond to the monad of the intelligible realm, or *ἐν ὧν*, in Iamblichean terms, with Kmeph as Intellect proper. However, Ikton may be a version of the Egyptian Irta, which is actually in Egyptian (i.e. Theban) theology the son of Kmeph and producer of the Ogdoad, so “Abamon” may be slightly astray here.

<sup>411</sup> Reading *νοοῦν* with Gale for the *νοῦν* of the MSS.

<sup>412</sup> There may be a reference here to the personified Silence (*συχή*) of Gnosticism, which is the consort, as well as the mode of existence, of the first principle. The notion that the highest power(s) must be worshipped in silence appears in both Chaldaean and Hermetic-Gnostic texts; see *Orac. chald.* frg. 16; 132; NHC VI.6.58.16–21. The notion was taken up by Porphyry at *Abst.* 2.34. Cf. also Proclus, *Comm. Tim.* 2.92.6; 3.222.14; *Comm. Alc.* 1.364.2; *Comm. Crat.* 59.6; *Comm. Parm.* 1171.4; *Theol. plat.* 320.51; Damascius 1.56.10; PGM VII. 766. For an appeal to “silence” as a protective force, see PGM IV. 558–584.

<sup>413</sup> This is indeed the role of the Demiurge, the lowest element of the intellectual realm in Iamblichus’s system (cf. Dillon 1973, 37–39). He “manifests” the forms which lie hidden in the *ἐν ὧν*, by projecting them as *λόγοι* into Soul, which passes them on to the physical realm.

<sup>414</sup> Amoun was commonly identified by the Greeks with Zeus, who is in the Neoplatonic system identified with the demiurgic Intellect. He is also identified with Kematef (Kmeph) in the Theban cosmology—described as “the soul of the Kematef snake.” “Abamon” here cites the Egyptian spelling; contrast the hellenised versions at III.3.108.11 and just below at VIII.5.267.11.

<sup>415</sup> Amoun was so-called as the generator of the cosmic egg.

ἀγαθῶν δὲ ποιητικὸς ὢν Ὅσιρις κέκληται, καὶ ἄλλας δι' ἄλλας δυνάμεις  
τε καὶ ἐνεργείας ἐπωνυμίας ἔχει.

Ἔστι δὴ οὗν καὶ ἄλλη τις ἡγεμονία παρ' αὐτοῖς τῶν περὶ γένεσιν  
ὄλων στοιχείων καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς δυνάμεων, τεττάρων μὲν ἀρρενικῶν 5  
τεττάρων δὲ θηλυκῶν, ἥντινα ἀπονέμουσιν ἡλίῳ· καὶ ἄλλη τῆς φύσεως  
ὄλης τῆς περὶ γένεσιν ἀρχή, ἥντινα σελήνῃ διδόασιν. Κατὰ μέρη τε δια-  
λαμβάνοντες τὸν οὐρανὸν εἰς δύο μοίρας ἢ τέτταρας ἢ δώδεκα ἢ ἕξ καὶ  
τριάκοντα ἢ διπλασίας τούτων ἢ ἄλλως ὅπως οὖν αὐτὰς διαιροῦντες, ἡγε- 10  
μονίας καὶ τούτων προτάττουσι πλείονας ἢ ἐλάττονας, πάλιν δὲ αὖ τὸν 10  
[265] ὑπερέχοντα αὐτῶν ἓνα προτιθέασιν. Καὶ οὕτως ἄνωθεν ἄχρη | τῶν τελευ- 1  
ταίων ἢ περὶ τῶν ἀρχῶν Αἰγυπτίοις πραγματεία ἀφ' ἐνὸς ἄρχεται, καὶ  
πρόεισιν εἰς πλῆθος, τῶν πολλῶν αὖθις ὑφ' ἐνὸς διακυβερωμένων καὶ  
πανταχοῦ τῆς ἀορίστου φύσεως ἐπικρατουμένης ὑπὸ τινος ὠρισμένου μέ- 5  
τρον καὶ τῆς ἀνωτάτω ἐνιαίας πάντων αἰτίας. Ὑλὴν δὲ παρήγαγεν ὁ θεὸς 5  
ἀπὸ τῆς οὐσιότητος ὑποσχισθείσης ἐλότῃτος, ἣν παραλαβὼν ὁ δημιουργὸς

[264].2 ποιητικὸς M et (tert. ι cancell., σ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: ποιητικοὶ V || 9-10  
ἢ ἄλλως — τούτων om. M || 9 αὐτὰς] αὐτὸν cj. Scott || 10 πάλιν V: πᾶσι  
M | αὖ τὸν scr. Westerink: αὐτὸν codd.

only on his technical ability), when he is productive of goods he is called Osiris, and he acquires other epithets in accordance with other powers and activities.

There is also among them<sup>416</sup> another system of rule over all the elements in the realm of generation and the powers resident in them, four masculine entities and four feminine, which they assign to the sun;<sup>417</sup> and another authority over the whole of nature subject to generation, which they grant to the moon.<sup>418</sup> Then, distinguishing the heaven into parts, dividing it into either two sections or four or twelve or thirty-six, or the double of that, or in whatever other way, they assign to these sections authorities greater or lesser in number, and again they place above them one deity who holds sway over them.<sup>419</sup> And thus it is that the doctrine of the Egyptians on first principles, starting from the highest level and proceeding to the lowest, begins from unity, and proceeds to multiplicity, the many being in turn governed by a unity, and at all levels the indeterminate nature being dominated by a certain definite measure and by the supreme causal principle which unifies all things.<sup>420</sup> As for matter, God derived it from substantiality, when he had abstracted materiality from it;<sup>421</sup> this

<sup>416</sup> Here again, the Egyptian persona seems to slip temporarily. As "Abamon," Iamblichus should have said, surely, "among us."

<sup>417</sup> This would seem to be a reference to the "Hermopolitan" ogdoad, four pairs of male gods and their female consorts, seen as aspects or projections of the sun-god Amun-Re (himself, as we have seen, equated with Kneph or Thoth; see our "Introduction").

<sup>418</sup> The sublunary realm is subject to the rule of fate. The Moon itself was generally associated with Thoth, but also with Osiris, Min, Shu and Khnum. Cf. Silverman in Shafer (1991, 37).

<sup>419</sup> "Abamon" here seems to be describing an astrological division of the heavens more Babylonian than Egyptian, involving gods of the zodiacal signs, and the set of thirty-six decans, as well as seventy-two divinities presiding over "weeks" of five days each. The deity who holds sway over all these may be seen as corresponding to the celestial demiurge in Iamblichus's system.

<sup>420</sup> The system set out here is distinctly Pythagorean in nature, but is also reminiscent (in terming the first principles One and Multiplicity) of the system of Speusippus, of which Iamblichus shows special knowledge in *Comm. math. sc.* 4 (assuming that to derive from Speusippus).

<sup>421</sup> The process envisaged here is rather obscure, as is the syntax, but what "Abamon" seems to be saying is that "the god" (presumably the second God, from whom, as οὐσιόπαις, substantiality is said to derive in VIII.2.262 above), having generated οὐσιότης, or the principle of substance, then extracts

ζωτικὴν οὖσαν τὰς ἀπλᾶς καὶ ἀπαθεῖς σφαίρας ἀπ' αὐτῆς ἐδημιούργησε, τὸ δὲ ἔσχατον αὐτῆς εἰς τὰ γεννητὰ καὶ φθαρτὰ σώματα διεκόσμησεν.

4 Διευκρινηθέντων δὴ οὖν τούτων οὕτως, καὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς συγ-  
γραμμασιν οἷς λέγεις περιτετυχηκέναι σαφὴς ἐστὶν ἡ διάλυσις· τὰ μὲν 10  
γὰρ φερόμενα ὡς Ἑρμοῦ ἐρμαϊκὰς περιέχει δόξας, εἰ καὶ τῇ τῶν φιλο-  
σόφων γλώττῃ πολλάκις χρήται· μεταγέγραπται γὰρ ἀπὸ τῆς αἰγυπτίας  
266 γλώττης ὑπ' ἀνδρῶν φιλοσοφίας οὐκ ἀπείρως ἐχόντων. Χαιρήμων | δὲ καὶ 1  
οἷτινες ἄλλοι τῶν περὶ τὸν κόσμον ἄπτονται πρώτων αἰτίων, τὰς τελευ-  
ταίας ἀρχὰς ἐξηγοῦνται· ὅσοι τε τοὺς πλανήτας καὶ τὸν ζωδιακὸν τοὺς τε  
δεκανοὺς καὶ ὥροσκόπους καὶ τοὺς λεγομένους κραταιοὺς καὶ ἡγεμόνας  
παραδιδόασιν, τὰς μεριστὰς τῶν ἀρχῶν διανομὰς ἀναφαίνουσιν. Τὰ τε ἐν 5

[265].13 Χαιρήμων cj. Gale: Χαιρήμην VM || [266].2 τὰς VM: εἰ τὰς  
(εἰ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 4 καὶ<sup>3</sup> om. Eus. pr. ev. 3, 4, 1 || 5 τὰς VM: εἰ τὰς (εἰ s. v.)  
V<sup>2</sup>

matter, which is endowed with life,<sup>422</sup> the Demiurge<sup>423</sup> took in hand and from it fashioned the simple and impassible (heavenly) spheres, while its lowest residue he crafted into bodies which are subject to generation and corruption.<sup>424</sup>

4 After the clarifications set out here, the particular problems which you say that you have encountered in the (Hermetic) writings receive a straightforward solution. Those documents, after all, which circulate under the name of Hermes contain Hermetic doctrines, even if they often employ the terminology of the philosophers; for they were translated from the Egyptian tongue by men not unversed in philosophy.<sup>425</sup> Chaeremon<sup>426</sup> and such other authorities as have dealt with the first causes of the cosmos only expound the lowest level of principles; and those that discourse on the planets and the zodiac, the decans and horoscopes and the so-called “powerful ones” and “leaders,”<sup>427</sup> deal with the particular allotments of the various principles. The information

ὀλότης, or the principle of matter, from that. We see here that, as is the case in the Chaldaean system and in that of the Gnostic sects, matter is declared to derive from the first principle.

<sup>422</sup> Taking ζῶτικὴν to mean both “living” and “life-bestowing.”

<sup>423</sup> Presumably the celestial demiurge, who may be identified with the “one deity” mentioned just above.

<sup>424</sup> We may note an important reference to this passage in Proclus, *Comm. Tim.* 386.10 Diehl (= Iamblichus, frg. 38 Dillon), though without naming the work. There is an outside chance that Proclus may be referring to a repetition of this terminology by Iamblichus in his *Timaeus* commentary (and Iamblichus does repeat himself from work to work elsewhere), but from the point of view of establishing Iamblichean authorship of the *De mysteriis* that would not much matter. On this see Dillon (1973, 312–13). Both the terms οὐσιότης and ὀλότης are found in surviving tractates of the *Corpus Hermeticum* (see e.g. *Corp. herm.* 8.3; 12.22), though there is nothing precisely corresponding to the doctrine set out here.

<sup>425</sup> This actually is a fair description of the general tone of the surviving Hermetic tractates, though “Abamon” accepts what we regard as the fiction (perpetrated by the authors of the documents themselves, cf. in particular *Corp. herm.* 13) that they are translations from the Egyptian.

<sup>426</sup> Chaeremon (first century C.E.), Egyptian priest and Stoic philosopher; author of the *Aigyptiaka*, a rather fanciful history of Egypt, and *Hieroglyphika*, an account of the way of life and doctrines of the Egyptian priestly class. His fragments are collected by Van der Horst (1984).

<sup>427</sup> The κραταιοί and ἡγεμόνες are classes of celestial deities. Cf. Porphyry ap. Eusebius, *Praep. ev.* 3.4.1, where we find κραταιοί ἡγεμόνες listed as

τοῖς σαλμεσχινιακοῖς μέρος τι βραχύτατον περιέχει τῶν ἐρμαϊκῶν διατάξεων· καὶ τὰ περὶ ἀστέρων ἢ φάσεων ἢ κρύψεων ἢ σελήνης ἀδείξεων ἢ μειώσεων ἐν τοῖς ἐσχάτοις εἶχε τὴν παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις αἰτιολογίαν. Φυσικά τε οὐ λέγουσιν εἶναι πάντα Αἰγύπτιοι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ζωὴν καὶ τὴν νοερὰν ἀπὸ τῆς φύσεως διακρίνουσιν οὐκ ἐπὶ τοῦ παντός μόνον ἀλ- 10  
 [267] λὰ καὶ | ἐφ' ἡμῶν· νοῦν τε καὶ λόγον προστησάμενοι καθ' ἑαυτοὺς ὄντας, 1  
 οὕτω δημιουργεῖσθαι φασὶ τὰ γιγνόμενα· προπάτορά τε τῶν ἐν γενέσει δημιουργὸν προτάττουσι, καὶ τὴν πρὸ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ τὴν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ 5  
 ζωτικὴν δύναμιν γινώσκουσι· καθαρὸν τε νοῦν ὑπὲρ τὸν κόσμον προτιθέασι, καὶ ἓνα ἀμέριστον ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ, καὶ διηρημένον ἐπὶ πάσας τὰς 5  
 σφαίρας ἕτερον. Καὶ ταῦτα οὐδ' ὅλως ψιλῶς θεωροῦσιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ τῆς ἱερατικῆς θεουργίας ἀναβαίνειν ἐπὶ τὰ ὑψηλότερα καὶ καθολικώτερα καὶ τῆς εἰμαρμένης ὑπερκείμενα παραγγέλλουσι πρὸς τὸν θεὸν καὶ δημιουρ-  
 γόν, μήτε ὕλην προσποιουμένους μήτε ἄλλο τι προσπαραλαμβάνοντας ἢ μόνον καιροῦ παρατήρησιν. 10

5 Ὑφηγήσατο δὲ καὶ ταύτην τὴν ὁδὸν Ἑρμῆς· ἡρμήνευσε δὲ Βί-  
 [268] τυς προφήτης Ἀμμωνι βασιλεῖ ἐν ἀδύτοις | εὐρῶν ἀναγεγραμμένην ἐν 1

[266].6 σαλμεσχινιακοῖς VM: σαλαμινιακοῖς (σαλμε cancell.) s. v. V<sup>2</sup> ἀλ-  
 μενικιακοῖς cj. i. m. B<sup>3</sup> || 7 φάσεων ] φάυσεων cj. Hopfner || [267].6 οὐδ'  
 ὅλως VM: οὐδὲ λόγῳ (δ' ὅλως p. n., δὲ λόγῳ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> | ψιλῶς cj. Boulliau i. m.  
 U: ψιλῷ VM | διὰ cj. Gale: ἐπὶ VM || 8 παραγγέλλουσι M: παραγγέλουσι  
 V

contained in the astrological almanacs<sup>428</sup> comprises only a very small part of the Hermaic system; and doctrine on the heliacal risings and settings of the stars,<sup>429</sup> or the waxings and wanings of the moon occupies the lowest place in the Egyptian account of the causes of things. The Egyptians do not maintain that all things are within the realm of nature, but they distinguish the life of the soul and that of the intellect from nature, not only at the level of the universe but also in our case. Postulating intellect and reason as higher principles<sup>430</sup> subsisting on their own, they declare that all things generated were created by their means. They set up a creator god<sup>431</sup> as forefather of all generated things, and they recognise both a vital power prior to the heavens and one in the heavens.<sup>432</sup> Above the cosmos they postulate a pure intellect, a single indivisible one in the cosmos as a whole, and another again, divided about the heavenly spheres.<sup>433</sup> And this is not for them purely a matter of theorising, but they recommend that we ascend through the practice of sacred theurgy to the regions that are higher, more universal and superior to fate, towards the god who is the creator, without calling in the aid of matter or bringing to bear anything other than the observation of the critical time for action.

5 Hermes also has set out this path; and the prophet Bitys<sup>434</sup> has given an interpretation of it to King Ammon, having

one class. In Damascius, *Comm. Parm.* 213.11-12, on the other hand, the *κραταιοί* are listed separately. It is possible, however, that the *καί* here should be omitted, to bring the text into line with Eusebius.

<sup>428</sup> *τοῖς σαλμεσχινιακοῖς* resists analysis, but it must refer to works on astrology. Cf. Hephaestion, *Apotelesmatica* 167.1 Pingree: *σαλμεσχοινιακῶν βιβλίων*.

<sup>429</sup> Taking *ἀστέρων* as dependent on the other two genitives.

<sup>430</sup> Taking this as the force of *προ-* in *προσθησάμενοι*.

<sup>431</sup> On the model of the Demiurge of the *Timaeus*.

<sup>432</sup> This latter is doubtless to be identified with the sun; the former may perhaps be seen as the intellectual archetype of the sun.

<sup>433</sup> These would correspond to the circles of the Same and the Other of the *Timaeus*.

<sup>434</sup> Cf. X.7.293.3. Another possible mention of Bitys is to be found in the alchemist Zosimos; see frg. 230-235 Jackson, where we read of "the tablet that Bitys [MSS. Bitos] wrote, and Plato the thrice-great and Hermes the infinitely great." See Fowden (1986, 150-53) for this translation and further discussion. There is no reason to doubt the existence of such a document, but



ἱερογλυφικοῖς γράμμασι κατὰ Σάιν τὴν ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ· τό τε τοῦ θεοῦ ὄνομα παρέδωκε τὸ διῆκον δι' ὅλον τοῦ κόσμου· εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ ἄλλαι πολλαὶ περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν συντάξεις, ὥστε οὐκ ὀρθῶς μοι δοκεῖς πάντα ἐπὶ φυσικὰ ἀνάγειν αἷτια τὰ παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις. Εἰσὶ τε γὰρ ἀρχαὶ παρ' αὐτοῖς 5 πλείονες καὶ περὶ πλειόνων οὐσιῶν, ὑπερκόσμοι τε δυνάμεις αἷς καὶ διὰ τῆς ἱερατικῆς ἀγιστείας ἐθεράπευσαν. Ἐμοὶ μὲν οὖν κοινὰς ταῦτα δοκεῖ παρέχεσθαι ἀφορμὰς εἰς τὴν διάλυσιν καὶ τῶν μετὰ ταῦτα ἐπεξητημένων ὅλων. Ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ δεῖ μὴδὲν ἀνεξέταστον αὐτῶν παραλιπεῖν, προσιστώμεθα καὶ τούτοις τοῖς προβλήμασι, περικρούσωμέν τε αὐτὰ πανταχόθεν, ἵν' 10 εἰδῶμεν ὅπη σαθρόν τι διαδοξάζει.

6 Λέγεις τοίνυν ὡς Αἰγυπτίων οἱ πλείους καὶ τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἐκ τῆς τῶν ἀστέρων ἀνῆψαν κινήσεως. Τὸ δὲ πῶς ἔχει δεῖ διὰ πλειόνων ἀπὸ τῶν [269] ἐρμαϊκῶν σοι νοημάτων | διερμηνεῦσαι. Δύο γὰρ ἔχει ψυχάς, ὡς ταῦτά 1

[268].2 σάιν M et i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: σών V || 4 τῶν V: om. M || 5 τε V: om. M || 8 ἐπεξητημένων V: ἐπιζητημένων M ἐπιζητουμένων cj. Gale || 9-10 προσιστώμεθα VM: προστιθώμεθα cj. B || 13 ἀστέρων i. m. V<sup>2</sup> cum (στ s. v.) M<sup>2</sup>: ἀέρων VM ἄστρων cj. Sicherl

discovered it inscribed in hieroglyphic characters in a sanctuary in Sais<sup>435</sup> in Egypt. He has handed down the name of god, which extends throughout the whole cosmos;<sup>436</sup> and there are many other treatises on the same subject, so that you are not correct, it seems to me, in referring all the doctrine of the Egyptians to causal principles within nature.<sup>437</sup> For they in fact recognise many principles, and relative to many sorts of essence, including supracosmic powers, which they worship by means of hieratic ritual. Indeed, this seems to me to provide a general basis for the solution of all the questions raised subsequent to this. But since we should leave none of them unexamined, let us address ourselves to these problems in turn, and let us test them from every angle, so that we may discern if they are based on any unsound opinion.<sup>438</sup>

6 You claim, then, that the majority of the Egyptians make what is in our power<sup>439</sup> depend upon the movement of the stars. The true situation in this regard must be explained to you at some length, on the basis of Hermetic concepts. For as these writings tell us, the human being has two souls:<sup>440</sup> one derives

its addressee, and the circumstances of its “discovery,” have all the marks of a pseudepigraphon.

<sup>435</sup> Supposedly the place where Solon encountered the Egyptian priests and translated part of their archives, according to Plato, *Tim.* 21e; *Crit.* 113a-b.

<sup>436</sup> The meaning of this is not very clear. In what sense does the name of the god (perhaps Ra?) extend throughout the cosmos? To make the point that “Abamon” is seeking to make, the god himself, at any rate, must transcend the cosmos, though he plays a demiurgic role.

<sup>437</sup> That is to say, not transcendent. Porphyry, it would seem, had criticised Egyptian religion for not envisaging divinities transcending the cosmos.

<sup>438</sup> This phrase embodies a close verbal reminiscence of Plato, *Phileb.* 55c7-8: γενναίως δέ, εἰ πῆ τι σαθρὸν ἔχει, πᾶν περιχρούμεν.

<sup>439</sup> τὸ ἐφ’ ἡμῶν is commonly rendered “free will,” which is somewhat misleading, since it introduces the concept of “will,” which is not present in the phrase.

<sup>440</sup> This doctrine of two souls, as opposed to a mere distinction between rational and irrational parts of the soul, is characteristic, within Platonism, only of the Neopythagorean Numenius, cf. frg. 43-44 Des Places, though it figures also in a passage of Origen’s *De Principiis* 3.40, where, however, he seems to be attributing it to some group of Gnostics or other. Fowden (1986, 152) highlights an unpublished text, possibly compiled by Psellos, which claims that Plato followed “the teachings of Hermes and Bitys” in maintaining that man

φησι τὰ γράμματα, ὁ ἄνθρωπος· καὶ ἡ μὲν ἐστὶν ἀπὸ τοῦ πρώτου νοητοῦ, μετέχουσα καὶ τῆς τοῦ δημιουργοῦ δυνάμεως, ἡ δὲ ἐνδιδομένη ἐκ τῆς τῶν οὐρανίων περιφορᾶς, εἰς ἣν ἐπείσέρπει ἡ θεοπτικὴ ψυχὴ· τούτων δὴ οὕτως ἐχόντων ἡ μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν κόσμων εἰς ἡμᾶς καθήκουσα ψυχὴ ταῖς περιόδοις 5 συνακολουθεῖ τῶν κόσμων, ἡ δὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ νοητοῦ νοητῶς παροῦσα τῆς γενεσιουργοῦ κυκλήσεως ὑπερέχει, καὶ κατ' αὐτὴν ἢ τε λύσις γίνεται τῆς εἰμαρμένης καὶ ἡ πρὸς τοὺς νοητοὺς θεοὺς ἄνοδος, θεουργία τε ὅση πρὸς τὸ ἀγέννητον ἀνάγεται κατὰ τὴν τοιαύτην ζωὴν ἀποτελεῖται.

7 Οὐκέτι δὴ οὖν, ὃ σὺ ἀπορεῖς, δεσμοῖς ἀλύτοις ἀνάγκης, ἣν εἰ- 10 μαρμένην καλοῦμεν, ἐνδέδεται πάντα· ἔχει γὰρ ἀρχὴν οἰκείαν ἡ ψυχὴ τῆς εἰς τὸ νοητὸν περιαγωγῆς καὶ τῆς ἀποστάσεως μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν γιγνομένων ἐπὶ δὲ τὸ ὄν καὶ τὸ θεῖον συναφῆς. Οὐδ' αὖ τοῖς θεοῖς τὴν εἰμαρμένην ἀνήψαμεν, οὕς ὡς λυτῆρας τῆς εἰμαρμένης ἐν τε ἱεροῖς καὶ ξοάνοις θε- [270] ραπεύομεν. Ἄλλ' οἱ μὲν θεοὶ λύουσι τὴν | εἰμαρμένην, αἱ δ' ἀπ' αὐτῶν 1 ἔσχαται φύσεις καθήκουσαι καὶ συμπλεκόμεναι τῇ γενέσει τοῦ κόσμου καὶ τῷ σώματι τὴν εἰμαρμένην ἐπιτελοῦσιν· εἰκότως ἄρα τοῖς θεοῖς ἀγιστεῖαν πᾶσαν προσάγομεν, ὅπως ἂν μόνοι διὰ πειθοῦς νοερᾶς τῆς ἀνάγκης ἄρχοντες τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς εἰμαρμένης ἀποκείμενα κακὰ ἀπολύωσιν. 5

[269].4 δὴ VM: δὲ (ἐ ex ἡ?) ut vid. V<sup>2</sup> || 7 κυκλήσεως (κυ i. m.) V<sup>2</sup>: κλήσεως VM || [270].2 καθήκουσαι (ἡ ex ι) V<sup>2</sup>: καθίχουσαι VM

from the primary intelligible,<sup>441</sup> partaking also of the power of the demiurge, while the other is contributed to us from the circuit of the heavenly bodies, and into this there slips<sup>442</sup> the soul that sees god.<sup>443</sup> This being the case, the soul which descends to us from the (celestial) realms<sup>444</sup> accommodates itself to the circuits of those realms, but that which is present to us in an intelligible mode from the intelligible transcends the cycle of generation, and it is in virtue of it that we may attain to emancipation from fate and ascent to the intelligible gods. That part of theurgy that is involved with ascent to the ungenerated achieves its end through such a level of life as this.

7 It is not, then, after all, the case, as you suggest in your query, that “all things are bound together by the indissoluble bonds of necessity,” which we call fate; for the soul contains its own principle of conversion to the intelligible, and of detachment from the realm of generation, and also of union with true being and the divine. Nor yet have we linked fate to the gods, whom indeed we worship by means of temples and statues as liberators from fate. But while the gods free us from fate, the lowest level of natures which descend from them and interweave themselves with the generative processes of the cosmos and with body do bring about fate. It is reasonable, then, that we should bestow all worship upon the gods, in order that, being the only ones who can dominate necessity by means of rational persuasion, they may free us from the evils that lie in wait for us from fate.<sup>445</sup>

had two distinct souls, a rational one emanating from the Demiurge and an irrational one arising from the heavenly sphere and subject to fate.

<sup>441</sup> That is to say, the One-Being, the highest element of the intelligible realm in Iamblichus's system.

<sup>442</sup> ἐπεισέρπει: literally, “slips in,” a remarkable turn of phrase, and a *hapax legomenon*. We preserve the active verb, but it is not clear if “Abamon” really intends the initiative to lie with the higher soul itself.

<sup>443</sup> θεοπτικὴ ψυχή: this appears to be a Hermetic term, cf. *Corp. herm. extr.* 2A6; 7.3 N-F: θεοπτικὴ δύναμις.

<sup>444</sup> κόσμοι here refers to the realms presided over by each of the planets, and the fixed stars.

<sup>445</sup> With this discussion of fate should be compared Iamblichus's treatment of the topic in his *Letter to Macedonius on Fate*. See also *Myst.* X.5 and *Comm. Phaedr.* frg. 6A.

Ἄλλ' οὐδὲ πάντ' ἔχεται ἐν τῇ φύσει τῆς εἰμαρμένης, ἀλλ' ἔστι καὶ  
 ἑτέρα τῆς ψυχῆς ἀρχὴ κρείττων πάσης φύσεως καὶ γνώσεως, καθ' ἣν καὶ  
 θεοῖς ἐνοῦσθαι δυνάμεθα καὶ τῆς κοσμικῆς τάξεως ὑπερέχειν, αἰδίου τε  
 ζωῆς καὶ τῶν ὑπερουρανίων θεῶν τῆς ἐνεργείας μετέχειν. Κατὰ δὲ ταύτην  
 οἰοί τε ἔσμεν καὶ ἑαυτοὺς λύειν. Ὅταν γὰρ δὴ τὰ βελτίονα τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν 10  
 ἐνεργῇ, καὶ πρὸς τὰ κρείττονα ἀνάγῃται αὐτῆς ἡ ψυχὴ, τότε χωρίζεται  
 παντάπασι τῶν κατεχόντων αὐτὴν εἰς τὴν γένεσιν, καὶ ἀφίσταται τῶν  
 χειρόνων, ζώῃν τε ἑτέραν ἀνθ' ἑτέρας ἀλλάττεται, καὶ δίδωσιν ἑαυτὴν εἰς  
 ἄλλην διακόσμησιν τὴν προτέραν ἀφεῖσα παντελῶς.

[271] | 8 Τί οὖν; οἷόν τε ἔστι διὰ τῶν πολεπόντων θεῶν λύειν ἑα- 1  
 τόν, καὶ τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἡγεῖσθαι μοιρηγέτας καὶ δεσμοῖς ἀλύτοις τοὺς βίους  
 δεσμεύοντας; κωλύει μὲν ἴσως οὐδὲν καὶ τοῦτο, εἰ τῶν θεῶν πολλὰς πε-  
 ριέχοντων οὐσίας καὶ δυνάμεις ἐν ἑαυτοῖς, ἐνυπάρχουσιν ἐν αὐτοῖς ἄλλαι 5  
 τε ἀμήχανοι ὅσαι διαφοραὶ καὶ ἐναντιώσεις. Οὐ μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦτο ἔνεστι  
 λέγειν, ὥς ἐν ἐκάστῳ τῶν θεῶν, καὶ τῶν ἐμφανῶν, εἰσὶ τινες οὐσίας νοη-  
 ταὶ ἀρχαί, δι' ὧν γίγνεται ἡ ἀπὸ τῆς γενέσεως τῶν κόσμων ταῖς ψυχαῖς  
 ἀπαλλαγὴ. Εἰ δ' ἄρα τις καὶ δύο γένη περικοσμίων καὶ ὑπερκοσμίων θεῶν  
 ἀπολείποι, διὰ τῶν ὑπερκοσμίων ἔσται ταῖς ψυχαῖς ἡ ἀπόλυσις· ταῦτα μὲν

[270].6-14 ἄλλ' — παντελῶς ante 269, 10 οὐκέτι transp. cj. Scott || 6  
 πάντ' ἔχεται cj. Gale: πᾶν δέδεται (δέδεται i. m.) V<sup>2</sup> πᾶν δέχεται VM || 7  
 γνώσεως VM: γενέσεως (γνώσεως p. n.) s. v. V<sup>2</sup> || [271].9 ἡ V: om. M

But it is not at all the case that everything in the realm of nature<sup>446</sup> is in the grip of fate: there is another principle of the soul superior to all nature and generation,<sup>447</sup> in virtue of which we can unite ourselves to the gods and transcend the cosmic order, and partake in eternal life<sup>448</sup> and in the activity of the supracelestial gods. It is in virtue of this principle that we are actually able to liberate ourselves. For when the better elements within us are active, and the soul is elevated towards the beings superior to it, then it separates itself fully from those things that tie it to generation, and it detaches itself from the worse, and changes one life for another, and gives itself to another order of things, completely abandoning its previous one.

8 Well then, is it possible to liberate oneself through the gods who revolve in the heavens, and at the same time to think of them as “rulers of destiny,”<sup>449</sup> and as “binding down our lives with indissoluble bonds?” There is actually, perhaps, no insuperable problem about this, if (one recognises that) the gods comprehend within themselves many essences and powers, and that there inhere in them in consequence a vast quantity of distinctions and even oppositions. However, one may also say this, that in each of the gods, even the visible ones, there are certain intelligible principles of essence, through which it is possible for souls to gain release from the generative process deriving from the cosmic spheres. If, then, one maintains the existence of two classes of gods, the cosmic and the supracosmic, it is through the supracosmic that the liberation of souls will come about. These

<sup>446</sup> Taking ἐν τῇ φύσει with πάντα rather than with τῆς εἰμαρμένης.

<sup>447</sup> Reading γενέσεως, with Ficino (and Thomas Taylor), for the γνώσεως of V and M, adopted by Des Places, but hardly appropriate to the context.

<sup>448</sup> A possible echo of the Christian expression ζωὴ αἰώνιος?

<sup>449</sup> μοιρογέτας; this term was used in traditional religion as an epithet of both Zeus and Apollo, but in the plural is only found elsewhere in Apollonius of Rhodes' *Argonautica* (1.1127), where it is used of two of the Idaean Dactyls, and in Alciphron (1.20), as an epithet of daemons.

οὖν ἐν τοῖς περὶ θεῶν ἀκριβέστερον λέγεται, τίνες τέ εἰσιν ἀναγωγοὶ καὶ 10  
 κατὰ ποίας αὐτῶν δυνάμεις, πῶς τε τὴν εἰμαρμένην λύουσι καὶ διὰ τί-  
 νων ἱερατικῶν ἀνόδων, τάξεις τε ὅποια τῆς κοσμικῆς ἐστὶ φύσεως, καὶ  
 ὅπως ἡ νοερὰ ταύτης ἐπικρατεῖ τελειοτάτη ἐνέργεια· ὥστε οὐδ' ὅπερ ἐκ  
 τῶν Ὀμηρικῶν σὺ παρέθηκας, τὸ στρεπτοὺς εἶναι τοὺς θεοὺς, ὅσιόν ἐστι  
 [272] φθέγγεσθαι. Νόμοις γὰρ ἀχράντοις καὶ νοεροῖς ὥρισται πάλοι τὰ ἔργα 1  
 τῆς ἱερᾶς ἀγιστείας, τάξει τε μέλζονι καὶ δυνάμει λύεται τὰ καταδεέστε-  
 ρα, εἰς βελτίονά τε μεθισταμένων ἡμῶν λῆξιν ἀπόστασις γίγνεται τῶν  
 καταδεεστέρων· καὶ οὐ παρὰ τὸν ἐξ ἀρχῆς τι θεσμὸν ἐπιτελεῖται ἐν τῷ  
 τοιῷδε, ἵνα μεταστραφῶσιν οἱ θεοὶ κατὰ τὴν εἰς ὕστερον γιγνομένην ἱε- 5  
 ρονορίαν, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης καθόδου ἐπὶ τούτῳ κατέπεμψεν ὁ θεὸς  
 τὰς ψυχάς, ἵνα πάλιν εἰς αὐτὸν ἐπανέλθωσιν. Οὕτε οὖν μεταβολή τις γί-  
 γνεται διὰ τῆς τοιαύτης ἀναγωγῆς οὔτε μάχονται αἱ κάθοδοι τῶν ψυχῶν  
 καὶ αἱ ἀνοδοί. Ὡς περ γὰρ καὶ ἐν τῷ παντὶ τῇ νοερᾷ οὐσίᾳ ἡ γένεσις καὶ  
 τὸ πᾶν τόδε συνήρτηται, οὕτω καὶ ἐν τῇ τῶν ψυχῶν διακοσμήσει τῇ περὶ 10  
 γένεσιν αὐτῶν ἐπιμελεῖα συμφωνεῖ καὶ ἡ ἀπὸ γενέσεως λύσις.

[271].11 ποίας ] πόσας cj. Boulliau i. m. U || [272].5 εἰς VM: om. cj. B  
 || 9 τῇ νοερᾷ M: τῇ νοερῷ V νοερῷ τῇ (pr. τῇ p. n., alt. s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>

matters, however, are given more detailed discussion in the treatises on the gods,<sup>450</sup> specifying which stimulate ascent<sup>451</sup> and in virtue of which of their powers, how they dissolve fate, and through what hieratic modes of ascent, what is the order of the cosmic nature, and how its most perfect intellectual activity manifests its ascendancy; all of which makes plain that those verses of Homer which you quote, to the effect that “the gods may be turned (by prayer),”<sup>452</sup> are impious even to utter. For it is from long ages past that the works of holy theurgy have been determined by immaculate and intellectual laws, and inferior levels of reality are neutralized by a greater order and power, in accordance with which we are separated from what is inferior and transfer ourselves to a better lot. And nothing in such a process is accomplished contrary to the ordinance laid down from the beginning, so that the gods should change their plans in virtue of some subsequently performed theurgic ceremony, but rather it is the case that from their first descent the god<sup>453</sup> sent down the souls for this purpose, that they should return again to him. There is therefore no element of change of plan involved in such a process of ascent, nor is there any conflict between the descents of souls and their ascents.<sup>454</sup> For even as, at the universal level, the realm of generation and this universe are dependent upon intellectual reality, so also in the dispensation of souls, liberation from the processes of generation is in harmony with the care bestowed upon their introduction into generation.

<sup>450</sup> It is tempting to see here a reference to Iamblichus's own treatise *On the Gods*, but this would surely be too gross a breach of “Abamon's” persona to be credible. The overt reference must surely be to some section of the books of Hermes. We need not exclude, however, a covert reference to Iamblichus's own writings on the subject, to be picked up on by those in the know.

<sup>451</sup> There is a class of gods in later Neoplatonism which are ἀναγωγοί. Cf. e.g. Proclus, *In Resp.* 1.90; 2.52; *Comm. Tim.* 1.154.

<sup>452</sup> Porphyry had provocatively quoted *Iliad* 9.497, presumably to make a comparison with the doctrine of the Egyptians.

<sup>453</sup> That is, the Demiurge.

<sup>454</sup> On the whole question of the reasons for, and modes of, the descents of souls, see Iamblichus's discussion in his *De anima* 26–30 Finamore-Dillon.



## IX

- 1 Φέρε δὴ οὖν καὶ τὴν πολύτροπον ἀπορίαν τὴν περὶ τοῦ ἰδίου  
 [273] δαίμονος ποικίλαις τε ἀντιλήψεσι χρωμένην | ἀπευθύνειν πειραθῶμεν τὸν 1  
 δυνατὸν ἡμῖν τρόπον. Ὡς μὲν οὖν ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν, διττῆς οὕσης περὶ τὸν  
 ἴδιον δαίμονα πραγματείας, τῆς μὲν θεουργικῆς τῆς δὲ τεχνικῆς, καὶ τῆς  
 μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν ἄνωθεν αἰτίων αὐτὸν ἐπικαλουμένης, τῆς δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν τῇ  
 γενέσει φανερῶν περιόδων, καὶ τῆς μὲν οὐδὲν προσχρωμένης γενεθλιαλο- 5  
 γία, τῆς δὲ ἐφαπτομένης καὶ τῶν τοιούτων μεθόδων, καὶ τῆς μὲν ὑπὲρ τὴν  
 φύσιν καθολικώτερον, τῆς δὲ μεριστῶς κατὰ τὴν φύσιν αὐτὸν θεραπευού-  
 σης, ἀτόπως μοι σὺ δοκεῖς τὴν τελειότεραν ἱερουργίαν ἐπὶ τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην  
 ὑπενεχθῆναι, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτης γυμνάσαι τὰς σαντοῦ ἐρωτήσεις.
- 2 Ἐπειτα καὶ ἐνταῦθά μοι φαίνη βραχύ τι μόριον τῆς περὶ αὐτὸν 10  
 πραγματείας ἀποτεμέσθαι· εἰωθότων γὰρ τῶν περὶ τὴν φύσιν ἐργοτεχ-  
 νιτῶν ἀπὸ τε τῶν δεκανῶν καὶ τῶν λειτουργῶν, ζῳδίων τε καὶ ἄστρον,  
 ἡλίου τε καὶ σελήνης, καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἄρκτων, ἀφ' ὅλων τε τῶν στοιχείων καὶ  
 [274] ἀπὸ τοῦ κόσμου καλεῖν αὐτὸν τεταγμένως, οὐκ ὀρθῶς | σὺ κατανειμάμε- 1  
 νος ἐν τι βραχύτατον τὸ τοῦ οἰκοδεσπότης μόριον, περὶ αὐτὸ τὰς ζητήσεις

[273].5 φανερῶν V: φανερώς M || 7 τῆς M et (η s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: τοῖς V |  
 αὐτὸν (ο s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: αὐτῶν VM || 11 ἀποτεμέσθαι scripsi: ἀποτέμεσθαι VM  
 ἀποτέμεσθαι cj. B

## BOOK IX

1 Well now, let us next try to sort out, as best we can, the complex problem, embodying multiple objections, that you raise about the personal daemon. To put the matter simply, one may take two approaches to the personal daemon, the one theurgic, the other technical; following the former procedure, one summons the daemon down from the higher causal principles, while according to the latter, one resorts to the visible cycles of the generated realm; the former makes no use of horoscopes and suchlike, while the latter makes use also of such procedures; the former operates on a more universal basis, transcending the realm of nature, while the latter conducts its worship on an individual level,<sup>455</sup> following the dictates of nature. All this being the case, you seem to me to be proceeding inappropriately in dragging down the more perfect type of worship to the merely human level, and exercising your prowess<sup>456</sup> in raising difficulties on that.

2 And even at that you seem to me to be cutting off just a small portion of the whole question concerning the daemon. For whereas those experts who operate within the bounds of nature<sup>457</sup> are accustomed to give it its designation in due order on the basis of the decans and the “servitors,”<sup>458</sup> the zodiacal signs and the stars, the sun and the moon, from the Greater and Lesser Bear, and from all the elements and the cosmos as a whole, you are making the error of detaching one small part of all this, that of the “master of the house,”<sup>459</sup> and have concentrated all your

<sup>455</sup> Presumably the force of the distinction here is that vulgar magic does not seek to fit the daemon into a larger metaphysical context when conducting its propitiatory rites. There are a number of prescriptions in the *PGM* for the summoning up of a *πάρεδρος*, or daemon assistant, which would be relevant here. Cf. *PGM* I. 42-195; VII. 505-528.

<sup>456</sup> An attempt to render the sarcastic overtones of *γυμνάσαι*.

<sup>457</sup> That is, the vulgar astrologers.

<sup>458</sup> These *λειτουργοί* seem to be those fixed stars which are within the domain of one or other of the decans, or which rise at the same time as they. Cf. Gundel (1936, 266).

<sup>459</sup> *οἰκοδεσπότης*: a technical term for the planet dominating the zodiacal sign under which an individual is born, this region being called its *οἶκος*.

ἐποιήσω. Καὶ ἐνταῦθα πάλιν ἀφέ(με)νος τοῦ προκειμένου καὶ τοῦ διερευ-  
νήσασθαι πῶς μὲν ὁ οἰκοδεσπότης αὐτὸν δίδωσι, κατὰ τίνα δὲ ἀτοπίαν  
ἢ ἀπορροίαν ἢ ζώην ἢ δύναμιν εἰς ἡμᾶς ἀπ' αὐτοῦ καθήκει, περὶ γενε- 5  
θλιαλογίας ποιῇ τὸν λόγον, εἴτε ὑφέστηκεν εἴτε μή, καὶ περὶ εὐρέσεως  
τοῦ οἰκοδεσπότη, εἴτε ἀδύνατός ἐστιν εἴτε δυνατή· ταῦτα δὴ τίνα ἔχει  
λόγον πρὸς τὴν περὶ τοῦ δαίμονος ἐπικράτειαν; δῆλον γὰρ ὡς οὐδὲν δια-  
φέρει πρὸς τὴν οὐσίαν αὐτοῦ τὰ τοιαῦτα τὸ ἡμᾶς εἰδέναι πῶς ὑφέστηκεν.  
Καὶ γὰρ ἐπὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ φύσει γιγνομένων, καὶ μὴ τυγχάνωμεν ἐπιστάμενοι 10  
〈πῶς〉 γίγνεται, τὰ ἐν τῷ παντὶ ὁμῶς ἔχει τὴν οἰκειάν ἕκαστα βεβαιότητα  
τῆς ἐαυτῶν οὐσίας. Κοινῶς μὲν οὖν οὕτω πρὸς τὰς ἀπορίας ἀπηντήσαμεν·  
κατ' ἰδίαν δὲ θέντες ὅσα ἐπιζητεῖς, πειρασόμεθα περὶ αὐτῶν ἀποδοῦναί  
σοι τὰς διαλύσεις.

[275] | **3** Φῆς γὰρ δὴ ὡς οὗτος ἦν ἄρα εὐδαίμων ὅστις μαθὼν τὸ 1  
σχῆμα τῆς αὐτοῦ γενέσεως τὰ εἰμαρμένα ἐκθύσαιτο γνούς τὸν ἐαυτοῦ  
δαίμονα· ἐμοὶ δὲ δοκεῖς ταῦτα οὐ πάνν σύμφωνα λέγειν οὔτε αὐτὰ πρὸς  
ἐαυτὰ οὔτε πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν· εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἀπὸ τοῦ σχήματος τῆς γενέ- 5  
σεως ἀπονενέμῃται ἡμῖν ὁ δαίμων, κακείθεν αὐτὸν ἀνευρίσκομεν, πῶς ἂν  
ἀπολυσαίμεθα τὰ εἰμαρμένα διὰ τῆς γνώσεως τοῦ καθ' εἰμαρμένην ἡμῖν  
δοθέντος δαίμονος; εἰ δὲ ἐκθύμεθα ὅντως τὰ ἀναγκαῖα, ὥσπερ δὴ σὺ  
λέγεις, διὰ τοῦ δαίμονος, πῶς ἔτι καθ' εἰμαρμένην ἡμῖν συγκεκλήρωται;  
Μάχεται μὲν οὖν οὕτωςι τὰ νῦν εἰρημένα πρὸς ἐαυτά, πρὸς δὲ τὴν 10  
ἀλήθειαν διαφωνεῖ· ἐπειδὴ οὐ πάντως ἀπὸ τοῦ σχήματος τῆς ἰδίας γενέ-  
σεως ὁ οἰκεῖος ἐκάστῳ δαίμων ἐφήκει, ἀλλ' ἦν τις αὐτοῦ καὶ πρεσβυτέρα

[274].3 ἐποιήσω VM: ἐποίησα (α s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> | ἀφέμενος cj. Westerink:  
ἀφ' ἐνός codd. | τοῦ<sup>2</sup> VM: τοῦτο (το s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 4 ἀτοπίαν VM: καὶ ποίαν  
(s. v., ἀτοπίαν p. n.) V<sup>2</sup> || 8-9 περὶ — τὴν M et i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: om. V || 11 πῶς  
add. cj. Boulliau i. m. U: om. VM || 12 οὖν V: om. M || 13 πειρασόμεθα  
VM: πειρασώμεθα cj. B || [275].1 εὐδαίμων (ευ s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: δαίμων VM || 2  
ἐκθύσαιτο cj. Parthey (cf. 275, 7): ἐκθήσαιτο VM (et, pace Parthey, F) ἐκλύσαιτο  
cj. Gale || 7 ἐκθύμεθα] ἐκλύμεθα cj. Gale

enquiries on that. And then, on top of that, you leave off your stated topic and your investigation as to how the “master of the house” bestows the daemon, and by what sort of displacement<sup>460</sup> or emanation or life or power it descends to us from it, and turn to discuss the casting of horoscopes, whether there is such an art or not, and about the discovery of the “master of the house,” whether it is impossible or possible. But what do these speculations have to do with the question of the nature and extent of the rule<sup>461</sup> of the daemon? It is obvious, surely, that it is of no relevance to our understanding of his essence to know the answers to such questions. After all, in the case of natural events, even if we do not happen to know how they came about, nevertheless those on the universal level each retain the stability proper to their essence. That is our general reply to the difficulties you raise; but we will now take up in detail the objects of your enquiry, and try to provide you with solutions to them.

**3** You say, then, that “he is surely happy who, knowing the (celestial) configuration<sup>462</sup> of his birth, and hence recognising his personal daemon, is enabled to neutralise by sacrifices<sup>463</sup> the power of fate.” You seem to me, however, to be saying here things neither concordant with each other nor with the truth; for if our daemon is allotted to us on the basis of the (celestial) configuration at our birth, and we discover him on that basis, then how would we free ourselves from the power of fate through the knowledge of the daemon who had been granted to us through fate? And if we really do manage to free ourselves through sacrifice from the grip of necessity, as you claim, by the agency of our daemon, how (can one claim) any longer that he is allotted to us in accordance with fate?

So your claims here are in conflict with one another, but they are also discordant with the truth, since the personal daemon of each of us does not in any case come to us on the basis of the

<sup>460</sup> A rare literal use of the word ἀτοπία, which normally means “strangeness” or “absurdity”—not recognised in LSJ.

<sup>461</sup> All this seems comprised in the term ἐπιχρόστεια.

<sup>462</sup> This is the meaning of σχῆμα here. The reference is to our horoscope.

<sup>463</sup> That is, reading ἐκθύσαιτο, with Parthey, for the ἐκθήσαιτο of the MSS. The alternative would be Thomas Gale’s ἐκλύσαιτο, which would mean very much the same.

ἀρχὴ ταύτης, ἣν εἰσαυθὺς μέτιμεν· καὶ διότι εἰ μόνως ἐντεῦθεν ἐθεωρεῖτο  
 [276] κατιῶν ὁ δαίμων, οὐκ ἦν ἄρα εὐδαίμων | ὁ τῆς τοῦ γενεσιουργοῦ δαίμονος 1  
 εὐτυχήσας γνώσεως. Τίς δ' ἂν καὶ ὁδηγὸν αὐτὸν λάβοι πρὸς τὴν τῶν εἰ-  
 μαρμένων ἐκθυσιν, εἰ ἐπὶ τούτῳ δέδοται, ὥστε ἀποπληρῶσαι τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς  
 εἰμαρμένης ἀπονεμόμενα;

Ἔτι δ' ἔμοιγε δοκεῖ μέρος τι τῆς τοῦ δαίμονος θεωρίας καὶ τοῦτο ἔσ- 5  
 χατον εἶναι τὸ τοιοῦτον, τὸ δ' ὅλον αὐτοῦ τῆς οὐσίας παραλείπεσθαι κατὰ  
 τὴν τοιαύτην μέθοδον. Ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μέν, εἰ καὶ ψευδῶς εἴρηται, ὅμως οὐκ  
 ἔχει γέ τινα ἀλλοτριότητα, τὰ δ' ἐφεξῆς περὶ τῆς τῶν κανόνων διαριθμή-  
 σεως καὶ περὶ τῆς ἐπιστήμης τῆς γενεθλιαλογικῆς ἀπορηθέντα, ὥς εἰσιν 10  
 ἀκατάληπτοι, οὐδεμίαν ἔχουσι πρὸς τὸ προκείμενον ἀμφισβήτησιν· εἴτε  
 γὰρ γνώριμοι εἴτε ἀκατάληπτοί εἰσιν αἶδε αἱ τέχναι, ὅμως ἢ ἀπὸ τῶν  
 ἄστρον ἀπόρροια ἀπονέμει τὸν δαίμονα, ἂν τε ἡμεῖς γιγνώσκωμεν ἂν τε  
 μή· δύναται δὲ ἡ θεία μαντικὴ διδάσκειν ἡμᾶς περὶ τῶν ἄστρον κατ' αὐτὸ  
 τὸ ἀληθέστατον, καὶ οὐ πάντως δεόμεθα τῆς τῶν κανόνων διαριθμήσεως  
 ἢ τῆς μαντικῆς τέχνης. 15

[277] | 4 Εἰ δὲ δεῖ καὶ τούτων ἀπαλλαγέντας ἐκεῖνο εἰπεῖν, οὐ καλῶς 1  
 μοι δοκεῖς τὸ ἀδύνατον εἰς γνώσιν τῆς μαθηματικῆς ἐπιστήμης συλλογί-  
 ζεσθαι, διότι πολλὴ διαφωνία περὶ αὐτὴν γέγονεν, ἣ ὅτι ὁ Χαιρήμων ἢ

[275].13 ἦν ἄρα VM: ἄρα ἦν cj. B || [276].10 ἀκατάληπτοι VM: ἀκα-  
 τάληπτα cj. Gale || 11 γνώριμοι M et (οι s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: γνώριμα V

configuration prevailing at our birth, but there is a yet more primordial causal principle of him than this, which I will explain later; and also because if one provided only this explanation of the daemon's descent, one would not then be made "happy"<sup>464</sup> by arriving at the knowledge of the daemon who is responsible for our entry into the realm of generation.<sup>465</sup> Who, after all, would take this figure as a guide to freeing oneself from fate, if he has been given to us only for the purpose of fulfilling the dispensations of fate?

Furthermore, it seems to me that such a procedure as yours addresses a part only of the whole theory of the daemon, and that the least important, while leaving unexamined the whole of his essential nature. But these questions, even if they are incorrectly phrased, nevertheless are not irrelevant to the subject; what follows, the problems you raise about the computation of tables and on the science of casting horoscopes, arguing that they are beyond our grasp, does not even manage to touch on the subject. For, irrespective of whether these arts are knowable or ungraspable, nonetheless it is the emanation from the stars that allots us our daemon, whether we comprehend this or not; the divine principles of divination can teach us about the stars on the truest principles, and we do not have any need of the "computation of tables" or of the art of divination.

4 Leaving that subject, at any rate, if I may say so, you do not seem to me to be right in concluding that a grasp of astrological science<sup>466</sup> is impossible, from the fact that there has been much disagreement<sup>467</sup> about it, or because Chaeremon or some

<sup>464</sup> This embodies a word-play between *δαίμων* and *εὐδαίμων*, "happy"—an etymology that goes back, in the Platonic tradition, all the way to Xenocrates (frg. 81 Heinze). The point of this remark, as becomes apparent from what follows, is that there is no great joy to be derived from discovering the cause of one's subjection to fate.

<sup>465</sup> This periphrasis seems necessary to express the full force of *γενεσιουργός* here.

<sup>466</sup> This is the meaning of *μαθηματικὴ ἐπιστήμη* in the present context.

<sup>467</sup> Porphyry will have been using a sceptical strategy here, the *διαφωνία* of authorities being a favourite argument for the withholding of judgement, as we see from many passages in Sextus Empiricus; see ch. 1 of Barnes (1990). "Abamon" shrewdly turns the sceptical argument against his opponent; Porphyry is not, after all, a sceptic.

ἄλλος τις πρὸς αὐτὴν ἀντείρηκεν. Ἐπεὶ τοῦτω γε τῷ λόγῳ πάντα ἔσται ἀκατάληπτα. Μυρίους γὰρ ἐσχέκασιν αἱ ὅλαι ἐπιστήμαι τοὺς ἀμφισβη- 5  
τοῦντας, καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐταῖς ἀπορήματα ἀναρίθμητα γέγονεν. Ὡςπερ οὖν  
πρὸς τοὺς ἐριστικούς εἰώθαμεν ἀντιλέγειν, ὅτι δὴ καὶ τοῖς ἀληθέσι τὰ-  
ναντία πέφυκε διαστασιάζειν καὶ οὐ μόνον τὰ ψευδῇ πρὸς ἄλληλα μάχεται,  
οὕτω καὶ περὶ τῆς μαθηματικῆς ἀντεροῦμεν, ὥς ὑπάρχει μὲν ἀληθείας, οἱ  
δὲ πλανώμενοι περὶ αὐτῆς οὐδὲν εἰδότες τῶν ἀληθῶν ἀντιλέγουσιν. Συμ- 10  
βέβηκε δὲ τοῦτο οὐ περὶ ταύτην μόνην, ἀλλὰ καὶ περὶ πάσας ἐκ θεῶν  
παραδοθείσας ἀνθρώποις ἐπιστήμας· προϊόντος γὰρ αἰ τοῦ χρόνου, πολ-  
λῷ τῷ θνητῷ καὶ πολλάκις ἀνακεραννύμεναι, ἐξίτηλον τὸ θεῖον ἦθος τῆς  
γνώσεως ἀπεργάζονται.

[278] Ἐρεστι μέντοι καὶ εἰ βραχὺ τοῦτο, ἔστιν ὁμῶς ἐναργές | τι τεκμήριον 1  
τῆς ἀληθείας διασώζειν. Ἐπεὶ καὶ τῆς τῶν θεῶν περιόδων ἀναμετρήσεως  
ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἔστι κατὰδηλα τὰ σημεῖα, ὁπόταν ἐκλείψει ἡλίου καὶ σε-  
λήνης καὶ παραβολὰς πρὸς τοὺς ἀπλανεῖς ἀστέρας τῆς σελήνης προμηνύη,  
καὶ συνομολογούμενη φαίνεται τῇ προσημασίᾳ τῆς ὄψεως ἢ πείρα. Οὐ 5  
μὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ αἱ διὰ παντὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος σωζόμεναι τῶν οὐρανίων τηρήσεις  
παρὰ τε Χαλδαίοις καὶ παρ' ἡμῖν συμμαρτυροῦσι πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν τῆς  
ἐπιστήμης ταύτης. Ἐχοι δ' ἂν τις καὶ γνωριμώτερα τούτων ἐπιδεικνύναι  
τεκμήρια, εἰ περὶ τούτων προηγουμένως ὁ λόγος γίγνοιτο· ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ πε-  
ριττά ἔστι καὶ οὐδὲν προσήκοντα πρὸς τὴν περὶ τοῦ δαίμονος ἐπίγνωσιν, 10  
ἀφίημι αὐτὰ εἰκότως. Ἐπὶ δὲ τὰ οἰκειότερα τούτων μέτειμι.

5 Φῆς γὰρ δὴ κατὰ τὸ σὸν γράμμα τῆς ἐπιστολῆς ὥς ἡ τοῦ οἰ-  
κοδεσπότητος τῆς γενέσεως λῆψις, ἢ τῶν οἰκοδεσποτούντων εἰ πλείους εἶεν  
ένός, σχεδὸν καὶ παρ' αὐτοῖς ὁμολογεῖται εἶναι ἀκατάληπτος, ἀφ' οὗ δὴ  
[279] φασιν ἐνεῖναι τὸν οἰκεῖον καταμαθεῖν δαίμονα. Καὶ πῶς ὁμολογεῖται | εἶ- 1  
ναι παρ' αὐτοῖς ἡ τοῦ οἰκοδεσπότητος γνῶσις ἀκατάληπτος, ὅποτε μεθόδους

[277].4-7 πάντα — τοὺς M et i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: om. V || 12 προϊόντος M et i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: προῦτόν (p. n.) V || [278].5 φαίνεται VM: φάνηται cj. Velsenius

other authority has written against it. On the basis of this argument, after all, all subjects would be beyond our grasp. For all sciences have attracted countless sceptics, and the points of controversy that they contain are innumerable. So, even as we customarily reply to contentious persons<sup>468</sup> that the truth also naturally has contrary views in opposition to it, and it is not only the case that falsehoods are in contention with one another, so also in the case of astrology our response is that it itself is true, but those who are wrongly informed about it fall into contradictions, since they know nothing of the truth. This situation, after all, is not peculiar to it alone, but it is true of all the sciences that have been handed down by the gods to men; for progressively, in the course of time, through the repeated admixture of much that is mortal, the divine character of the knowledge contained in them comes to be extinguished.

It is nonetheless possible, even if to a small degree, to preserve some clear proof of the truth of this science. For the signs of the measuring function of the heavenly circuits are manifest to our eyes, when they announce eclipses of the sun and moon and conjunctions of the moon with the fixed stars, and the experience of our sight is seen to confirm their prognostications. In addition, the observations of celestial phenomena preserved down the ages by both the Chaldaeans and ourselves<sup>469</sup> testify to the truth of this science. One could produce even more manifest proofs than these, if our present discussion were concerned primarily with these matters; but since this is superfluous and irrelevant to the identification of the (personal) daemon, it will not seem unreasonable if I leave them aside. I will pass, then, to more relevant questions.

5 You make the claim in the course of your letter that “the identification of the ‘master of the house’<sup>470</sup> of birth, or of the masters of the house, if there are more than one, is more or less agreed by them to be beyond our grasp, but yet it is from this, they say, that one can learn the identity of one’s personal daemon.” But how can it be admitted by them that the knowledge of the master of the house is ungraspable, when they have handed down

<sup>468</sup> ἐριστικοί: the technical term for sophistical raisers of problems.

<sup>469</sup> That is, the Egyptians; “Abamon” is in character here.

<sup>470</sup> Cf. IX.2.274.5 and note ad loc.



παραδεδώκασι περὶ τῆς εὐρέσεως αὐτοῦ σαφεῖς, ἐπὶ τε τῶν ἀμφισβητου-  
 μένων στοιχεῖα πρὸς τὴν διάκρισιν ἀναδιδάσκουσιν οἱ μὲν πέντε οἱ δὲ καὶ  
 πλείονα τούτων οἱ δὲ ἐλάττονα; πλὴν ἵνα τοῦτο παρῶμεν, ὥς μεῖζον ἔρ- 5  
 γον ἐπ' ἀμφοτέρω τὰ συμβαίνοντα σκεψώμεθα· εἴτε γὰρ δυνατόν εὑρεῖν  
 τὸν οἰκοδεσπότην τῆς γενέσεως, ἔστι δῆπου καὶ ὁ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ διδόμενος  
 δαίμων γνώριμος· εἴτε ἀκατάληπτός ἐστιν, ἡμεῖς μὲν αὐτὸν ἀγνωσοῦμεν  
 κατὰ γε τὴν ὑπόθεσιν ταύτην, οὐδὲν δὲ ἥττον ὅ τε οἰκοδεσπότης ἐστὶ  
 καὶ ὁ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ διδόμενος δαίμων. Τί οὖν κωλύει διὰ γενεθλιαλογίας μὲν 10  
 δύσκολον αὐτὸν εἶναι εἰς εὐρεσιν, διὰ τῆς ἱερᾶς δὲ μαντείας ἢ θεουργίας  
 εὐπορίαν εἶναι πολλὴν εἰς ἐπιστήμην; ὅλως δὲ οὐδὲ ἀπὸ τοῦ οἰκοδεσπότην  
 μόνου ἐνδίδοται, ἀλλὰ πολλαὶ εἰσιν ἀρχαὶ αὐτοῦ καθολικώτεραι ἢ κατὰ  
 τὸν οἰκοδεσπότην. Ἔτι δὲ ἡ τοιαύτη μέθοδος τεχνικὴν τινα εἰσάγει καὶ  
 ἀνθρωπίνην τὴν περὶ τὸν ἴδιον δαίμονα πραγματείαν· οὐδὲν ἄρα ὕγιες ἐν 15  
 τούτοις διαπορεῖς.

[280]

| 6 Εἰ δὲ δεῖ σοι τὸν ἀληθῆ περὶ τοῦ οἰκείου δαίμονος λό- 1  
 γον ἀποκαλύψαι, οὐκ ἄφ' ἐνὸς μέρους τῶν ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ οὐδ' ἀπὸ τινος  
 στοιχείου τῶν ὀρωμένων ἀπονέμεται ἡμῖν οὗτος, ἀφ' ὅλου δὲ τοῦ κόσμου  
 καὶ τῆς παντοδαπῆς ἐν αὐτῷ ζωῆς καὶ τοῦ παντοδαποῦ σώματος, δι' ὃν  
 ἡ ψυχὴ κάτεισιν ἐπὶ τὴν γένεσιν, ἀπομερίζεται τις ἡμῖν μοῖρα ἰδίᾳ πρὸς 5  
 ἕκαστον τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν ἀπομεριζομένη κατ' ἰδίαν ἐπιστάσιαν. Οὗτος δὲ οὖν  
 ὁ δαίμων ἐστηκεν ἐν παραδείγματι πρὸ τοῦ καὶ τὰς ψυχὰς κατιέναι εἰς  
 γένεσιν· ὃν ἐπειδὴν ἔλθῃ ἡ ψυχὴ ἡγεμόνα, εὐθὺς ἐφέστηκεν ὁ δαίμων  
 ἀποπληρωτῆς τῶν βίων τῆς ψυχῆς, εἰς τὸ σῶμά τε κατιοῦσαν αὐτὴν συν-  
 δεῖ πρὸς τὸ σῶμα, καὶ τὸ κοινὸν ζῶον αὐτῆς ἐπιτροπεύει, ζώην τε τὴν 10

[279].7 τὸν M: om. V | δῆπου V: δὴ M || 9 δὲ VM: δὴ cj. B ||  
 12 εὐπορίαν (ευ i. r. ex α) V<sup>2</sup>: ἀπορίαν VM || [280].5 τις i. m. V<sup>2</sup>: τῆς VM  
 | ἡμῖν cj. Rasche: ἐν ἡμῖν VM || 9 ψυχῆς VM: ψυχῆς, δς καὶ cj. Gale

clear methods for its discovery, and when in doubtful cases they set out for their elucidation in some cases five principles, in others even more than that, while in others less? However, to pass over that, let us consider, as a more important question, what the consequences might be in each of these two cases: if it is possible to identify the master of the house of birth, then the daemon which is granted by this is also knowable; if on the other hand it is beyond our grasp, then we on this hypothesis are ignorant of it, but nonetheless there is such a thing as the master of the house and likewise the daemon granted by it. What is there, then, to prevent this daemon being difficult to discover by means of the casting of nativities, but that sacred divination or theurgy offer great facilities for its identification? In any case, it is not only the master of the house that imparts this information; there are many principles more universal than the master of the house. Furthermore, such a method of procedure introduces a technical and human perspective into the enquiry about the personal daemon. The problem you raise, therefore, has no sound basis.

6 If I am to reveal to you the truth about the personal daemon, it is not from one part only of the heavenly regions nor from any one element of the visible realm that this entity is imparted to us, but from the whole cosmos and from the whole variety of life within it and from every sort of body, through all of which the soul descends into generation, there is apportioned to us an individual lot, assigned to each of the parts within us according to an individual authorising principle.<sup>471</sup> This daemon, then, stands as a model for us even before the souls descend into generation. When a soul has selected a daemon as its guide,<sup>472</sup> then straightway it stands over it as the fulfiller of the various levels of life of the soul, and as the soul descends into the body it binds it to the body, and

<sup>471</sup> This meaning of ἐπιστασία may owe something to the description of the Demiurge's launching of the souls into bodily existence at *Timaeus* 41d–e, but, if so, it is overlaid with the later Platonist belief (which Porphyry also shares) that the soul acquires astral “garments” (χιτῶνες) in the course of its descent through the planetary spheres; but this acquisition of a “lot” (μοῖρα) is here personalized as a daemon.

<sup>472</sup> This owes much to such Platonic passages as *Phaedr.* 248c and *Resp.* 617d.

ιδίαν τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτὸς κατευθύνει, καὶ ὅσα λογιζόμεθα, αὐτοῦ τὰς ἀρχὰς  
 ἡμῖν ἐνδιδόντος διανοούμεθα, πράττομέν τε τοιαῦτα οἷα ἂν αὐτὸς ἡμῖν ἐπὶ  
 νοῦν ἄγῃ, καὶ μέχρι τοσοῦτου κυβερνᾷ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους, ἕως ἂν διὰ τῆς  
 [281] ἱερατικῆς θεουργίας θεὸν ἔφορον ἐπιστήσωμεν καὶ ἡγεμόνα τῆς | ψυχῆς· 1  
 τότε γὰρ ἢ ὑποχωρεῖ τῷ κρείττονι, ἢ παραδίδωσι τὴν ἐπιστάσιν, ἢ ὑπο-  
 τάττεται ὥς συντελεῖν εἰς αὐτόν, ἢ ἄλλον τινὰ τρόπον ὑπηρετεῖ αὐτῷ ὥς  
 ἐπάρχοντι.

7 Ἀπὸ δὴ τούτων ῥαδίως ἀποκρινοῦμαί σοι καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἐφε- 5  
 ξῆς ἐρώτημα. Οὐ γάρ τις τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν μέρους, πάντων δ' ἅπαξ ἀπλῶς  
 ἡγεῖται, διήκει τε ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν ἐφ' ἡμῖν ἀρχήν, ὥσπερ ἀφ' ὅλων τῶν ἐν  
 τῷ παντὶ διατάξεων ἀπονενέμῃται. Καὶ γὰρ ὅπερ σὺ παρατίθῃσαι τεκμή-  
 ριον τὸ περὶ τῶν κατὰ μέρη τοῦ σώματος ἐφεστηκότων δαιμόνων ὑγείας  
 καὶ τοῦ εἶδους καὶ τῆς ἕξεως τῆς ἐν αὐτοῖς ὄντων συνοχέων καὶ ἐνὸς τοῦ 10  
 ἐπὶ πᾶσι κοινῶς ἐπιβεβηκότος προστάτου, τοῦτο ποιοῦ δεῖγμα τῆς εἰς ἕνα  
 δαίμονα πάντων τῶν ἐν ἡμῖν ἀνηκούσης προστασίας· μὴ τοίνυν διαίρει τὸν  
 μὲν σώματος τὸν δὲ ψυχῆς τὸν δὲ νοῦ δαίμονα. Καὶ γὰρ ἄτοπον εἰ τὸ μὲν  
 ζῶον ἔν ἐστιν, ὁ δὲ ἐφεστηκὼς αὐτῷ δαίμων πολυειδής· καίτοι πανταχοῦ  
 τὰ ἀρχοντα τῶν ἀρχομένων ἐστὶν ἀπλούστερα· ἀτοπώτερον δ' ἔτι τούτου 15  
 [282] εἰ μὴδὲ συμφυῆ διηρημένα δ' ἔσται | χωρὶς ἀπ' ἀλλήλων τὰ ἐπάρχοντα 1  
 μόρια τῶν πολλῶν δαιμόνων. Ποιεῖς δὲ καὶ ἐν αὐτοῖς ἐναντίωσιν τῶν μὲν

[280].12 τε M: τε οὖν V om. cj. B || [281].8 σύ VM: σοί cj. B |  
 παρατίθῃσαι cj. Westerink: -τίθῃσαι codd. || 11 εἰς M et s. v. V<sup>2</sup>: om. V ||  
 14 ἔν ἐστιν M et fec. V<sup>2</sup>: ἔνεστιν V || 16 εἰ μὴδὲ scripsi: εἰ δὲ μὴ VM εἰ μὴ  
 (δὲ p. n.) V<sup>2</sup>

it supervises the composite living being arising from it,<sup>473</sup> and personally regulates the particulars of the life of the soul; and all our reasonings we pursue thanks to the first principles which it communicates to us,<sup>474</sup> and we perform such actions as it puts into our minds; and it continues to direct men's lives up to the point at which, through sacred theurgy, we establish a god as the overseer and leader of our soul; for then it either withdraws in deference to the superior principle, or surrenders its administrative role, or subordinates itself so as to contribute to the god's direction of the soul, or in some other way comes to serve it as master.

7 On the basis of these data, then, I can easily respond to your next question. For the personal daemon does not guide just one or another part of our being, but all of them at once, and it extends to the whole administration of us, even as it has been allotted to us from all the regions of the universe.<sup>475</sup> And indeed the evidence that you adduce concerning daemons presiding over the various parts of the body which attend to their health and form and condition,<sup>476</sup> and then a single overseer established over all in common, this you may take as an indication of the supervisory role granted to a single daemon over everything that concerns us; do not therefore make a distinction between one daemon concerned with the body, another with the soul, and another with the intellect. It would be absurd, after all, if the living being were one, and the daemon presiding over it were multiform—although the general rule is that ruling entities are simpler than the subjects of their rule; and it would be even more absurd than this if the directive elements of the various daemons were not coordinated, but

<sup>473</sup> That is to say, the ensouled body, the animate aspect of which, for Plotinus and his successors, was not properly soul itself, but a projection of soul (cf. e.g. *Enn.* I.1).

<sup>474</sup> This seems to be a "theological" explanation of our acquisition of basic principles of reasoning, such as the law of the excluded middle, which otherwise must be assumed to be naturally inherent in the rational soul.

<sup>475</sup> The force of this argument is only apparent if one recognises that the daemon is the personification of the sum-total of the astral and planetary influences upon us.

<sup>476</sup> Porphyry seems to have adduced some well-attested magical beliefs about daemonic agents presiding over the various parts of the body, and over various human activities. "Abamon," we may note, does not reject these; he merely seeks to make use of them to support his position.

ὡς ἀγαθῶν τῶν δὲ ὡς φαύλων, οὐδαμοῦ τῶν κακῶν ἡγεμονικὴν ἐχόντων  
 λῆξιν οὐδὲ ἰσαξίως ἀντιδιαιρουμένων τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς.

8 Ἐπειτα τούτων ἀποστάς ἐπὶ μὲν τὴν φιλόσοφον ἀπολισθάνεις 5  
 δόξαν, ἀνατρέπεις δὲ τὴν ὅλην περὶ τοῦ ἰδίου δαίμονος ὑπόθεσιν. Εἰ γὰρ  
 μέρος ἐστὶ τῆς ψυχῆς, οἷον τὸ νοερόν, καὶ οὗτός ἐστιν εὐδαίμων ὁ τὸν νοῦν  
 ἔχων ἔμφρονα, οὐκέτι ἐστὶν ἑτέρα τάξις οὐδεμία κρείττων ἢ δαιμόνιος,  
 ἐπιβεβηκυῖα τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ὡς ὑπερέχουσα. Μέρη δέ τινα τῆς ψυχῆς  
 ἢ δύναμις διηρημένως κυριώτερα ἔσται τῶν πλειόνων εἰδῶν τῆς ἐν ἡμῖν 10  
 ζωῆς, καὶ ταῦτα συμφυῶς ἀλλ' οὐχ ὡς ἐξηρημένα κατὰ φύσιν ἡμῶν τῆς  
 ὅλης συστάσεως ἐπάρχοντα.

[283] | 9 Μνημονεύεις τοίνυν μετὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἄλλης πραγματείας πε- 1  
 ρὶ τὸν ἴδιον δαίμονα, τῆς μὲν ὡς πρὸς δύο τῆς δὲ ὡς πρὸς τρεῖς ποιουμένης  
 τὴν θεραπείαν. Αὕτη δ' ἐστὶ πᾶσα διημαρτημένη. Τὸ γὰρ διαιρεῖν ἀλλὰ μὴ  
 εἰς ἐν ἀνάγειν τὰ ἐφεστηκότα ἡμῖν αἷτια ψευδός ἐστι, καὶ διαμαρτάνει τῆς  
 ἐν πᾶσιν ἐπικρατούσης ἐνώσεως. Καὶ ἡ μερίζουσα δ' αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ σῶμα 5  
 δόξα καὶ τὴν τοῦ σώματος προστασίαν, εἰς μέρος τι τὸ βραχύτατον αὐτοῦ

[282].5 ἀπολισθάνεις V: ἀπολισθαίνεις M || 7-8 ὁ — ἐστὶν VM: ὅστις  
 νοῦν ἔχει σοφον· ἔτι cj. Gale || 8 κρείττων VM: κρείττων ἔσται cj. Gale ||  
 9 ἀνθρωπίνης VM: ἀνθρωπίνης ψυχῆς cj. Gale || 11 οὐχ V: om. M || 12  
 ἐπάρχοντα VM: ὑπάρχοντα cj. B || [283].2 ἴδιον cj. Gale: ἄιδιον VM

separated off from one another. You also set up an opposition between them, as of good against evil, whereas in fact evil daemons are in no case assigned an administrative role, nor are they set over against the good on a footing of equality.<sup>477</sup>

8 Then, leaving aside these questions, you slide off into philosophy,<sup>478</sup> and in the process subvert the whole basis of the doctrine of the personal daemon. For if (the daemon) is merely a part of the soul, as for instance the intellectual part, and that person is “happy”<sup>479</sup> who has his intellect in a sound state, there will no longer be any need to postulate any other order, greater or daemonic, to preside over the human order as its superior. Certain parts, or a faculty, of the soul will then on its own be more dominant than the various types of life within us, and that while presiding in accordance with nature over our whole constitution on the same natural level,<sup>480</sup> but not from a transcendent perspective.

9 You make mention, then, after this of another approach to the question of the personal daemon, one which directs worship towards it either as a double entity, or even as a triple one. But this whole approach is totally misguided. To divide the causal principles which preside over us, and not to bring them together into one, is quite false, and errs against the unity that prevails over all things. Also, the view that limits the daemon to the body and the administration of the body contracts its area of command into

<sup>477</sup> Here again, “Abamon” is concerned not to reject but rather to “purify” the beliefs of vulgar magic, in this case that there are evil as well as good spirits related to all bodily parts and functions. He wishes to downgrade the evil spirits to the rank of “spoilers,” or incidental entities.

<sup>478</sup> A nice put-down here, consonant with Iamblichus’s attested views on the subordination of philosophy to theurgy (cf. II.11.96–97). Porphyry is in fact introducing a basic challenge to the concept of a guardian daemon as doing the sort of things that Iamblichus would wish it to do, in particular as being the key element in human decision-making.

<sup>479</sup> Once again, this involves the word-play with *δαίμων* and *εὐδαίμων*; see the note on IX.3.

<sup>480</sup> “Abamon” appears to be objecting to the concept of one part or faculty of the soul acting as the director of the soul as a whole, which is a basic principle of Platonism.

καθέλκει τὴν ἡγεμονίαν. Ὡστε τί δεῖ τὰς ἐχομένας τῆς τοιαύτης δόξης  
 ἱερουργίας ἐπισκοπεῖν, αὐτῆς τῆς πρώτης αὐτῶν ἀρχῆς σαθρᾶς οὔσης; εἰς  
 μὲν οὖν ἐστὶ καθ' ἕκαστον ἡμῶν ὁ οἰκεῖος προστάτης δαίμων, κοινὸν δὲ ἡ  
 τὸν αὐτὸν πάντων ἀνθρώπων οὐ δεῖ αὐτὸν ὑπολαμβάνειν, οὐδ' αὖ κοινὸν 10  
 μὲν ἰδίως δὲ ἑκάστῳ συνόντα· ἡ γὰρ κατ' εἶδος ἕκαστον διαίρεσις καὶ ἡ τῆς  
 ὕλης ἑτερότης οὐκ ἐπιδέχεται τὴν τῶν καθ' αὐτὰ ἀσωμάτων κοινότητά τε  
 καὶ ταυτότητα. Διὰ τί οὖν κοινῇ κλήσει καλεῖται ὑπὸ πάντων; ὅτι καθ'  
 ἓνα τὸν κύριον θεὸν τῶν δαιμόνων ἡ κλήσις αὐτῶν γίγνεται, ὃς ἐξ ἀρχῆς  
 [284] τε ἀφώρισε τοὺς ἰδίους δαίμονας | ἑκάστοις, καὶ δὴ καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἱερουργίαις 1  
 ἀναφαίνει κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν βούλησιν τοὺς ἰδίους ἑκάστοις. Ἄει γὰρ ἐν τῇ  
 θεουργικῇ τάξει διὰ τῶν ὑπερεχόντων τὰ δεύτερα καλεῖται· καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν  
 δαιμόνων τοίνυν εἰς κοινὸς ἡγεμῶν τῶν περὶ τὴν γένεσιν κοσμοκρατόρων  
 καταπέμπει τοὺς ἰδίους δαίμονας ἑκάστοις. Ἐπειδὰν μέντοι παραγίγνηται 5  
 ὁ οἰκεῖος ἑκάστῳ, τότε καὶ τὴν ἰδίαν θεραπείαν ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τὸ σφέτερον  
 ὄνομα ἐκφαίνει, τρόπον δὲ τῆς ἰδίας κλήσεως τὸν ἴδιον παραδίδωσιν.

**10** Καὶ αὕτη τάξις ἐστὶν ἡ πρόσφορος τῶν δαιμόνων· ἡ μὲν συγ-  
 γενῆς οὕσα τοῖς καλουμένοις, ἡ δ' ἀπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων αἰτίων καθή-  
 κουσα, τρίτη δὲ κοινὴν ποιουμένη τὴν ἀπ' ἀμφοτέρων τούτων συντέλειαν. 10  
 Μὴ τοίνυν ἀφομοίου τὰς θείας κλήσεις ταῖς ἀνθρωπίναις μηδὲ τὰς ἀρρή-  
 τους ταῖς ῥηταῖς, μηδὲ τὰς πρὸ παντὸς ὄρου καὶ παντὸς ἀορίστου τρόπον  
 ταῖς παρ' ἀνθρώποις παρὰβαλλε ὠρισμέναις ἢ ἀορίστοις προστάξεσιν. Οὐ-  
 [285] δὲν γὰρ ἔχει κοινὸν τὰ παρ' ἡμῖν τῷ ὅλῳ γένει καὶ καθ' ὅλην τὴν τάξιν | 1

[283].9 ἡ V: καὶ i. m. V<sup>2</sup> om. M || [284].5 παραγίγνηται VM: παραγέ-  
 νηται cj. B || 7 ἐκφαίνει VM: ἐμφαίνει cj. Gale

what is in fact the least extensive part of it.<sup>481</sup> That being the case, what use is it to examine the ritual prescribed on the basis of such a view, when the actual first principle on which it is based is unsound? No, the personal daemon that presides over each one of us is one, and one should not conceive of it as being common or the same for all men, nor yet common, but attached in a particular way to each individual; for the division into individual species and the otherness proper to matter does not admit the universality and identity proper to the essentially incorporeal. "Why then," (you ask),<sup>482</sup> "is it called upon by all in a common evocation?" Because, (I reply), the invocation of daemons is made in the name of the single god who is their ruler, who from the beginning has apportioned a personal daemon to each individual, and who in the theurgic rites reveals, according to his good pleasure, their personal daemon to each. For it is always the case, in the theurgic hierarchy, that secondary entities are summoned through the intermediacy of their superiors; and in the case of daemons, then, the single common leader of the cosmocrators<sup>483</sup> in the realm of generation sends down to the individual recipients their personal daemons. However, when the personal daemon comes to be with each person, then he reveals the mode of worship proper to him and his name, and imparts the particular manner in which he should be summoned.

**10** This, then, is the order proper to daemons: one class which is of the same nature as those uttering the invocation; another which takes its descent from superior causal principles; and a third which brings about a synthesis of both of the former. Do not, then, assimilate divine invocations to mortal ones, nor ineffable ones to expressible ones, nor should you compare those that antecede all determination and even any indeterminate mode with determinate or indeterminate commands emanating from mortals. For procedures proper to us have nothing in common with

<sup>481</sup> Porphyry will no doubt have been advancing the Plotinian doctrine that the daemon, as an agent of Fate, will only have influence over the body, or at best the lower part of the soul.

<sup>482</sup> This appears to be the representation of a question by Porphyry.

<sup>483</sup> Cf. II.3.71, and note ad loc. In that context, the *κοσμοκράτορες* are identified with the higher type of archon. In later authors, however, such as Proclus or Damascius, the term *κοσμοκράτωρ* seems always to refer to the planetary gods.



ὑπερέχουσιν ἡμῶν καὶ τοῖς ὅλης τῆς οὐσίας ἡμῶν καὶ φύσεως ἐπάρχουσιν· ἀλλ' ἐνταῦθα καὶ μάλιστα σφάλματα συμβαίνει τοῖς ἀνθρώποις τὰ μέγιστα, ἡνίκα ἂν ἀπὸ τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ἀσθενείας συλλογίζωνται τι περὶ τῶν δαιμονίων ἐπιστασιῶν, καὶ τοῖς μικροῖς καὶ οὐδενὸς ἀξίοις καὶ 5 διηρημένοις τὰ μεγάλα καὶ ἀξιόλογα καὶ τέλεια τεκμαίρονται. Τοσαῦτα καὶ περὶ τοῦ ἰδίου δαίμονος πρὸς σὲ ἀποκρινόμεθα πρὸς τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν εἰρημένοις.

[285].2 τοῖς M: τῆς V || 2-3 ἐπάρχουσιν cj. Gale: ὑπάρχουσιν VM ||  
7 σὲ V: σὲ καὶ M

beings which<sup>484</sup> surpass us generically and in every category and which preside over our whole being and nature; but it is precisely here that men commit the gravest errors, when they draw conclusions based on the weakness of the human condition about the administrative arrangements proper to daemons, and on the basis of what is puny, worthless and fragmented make conjectures about what is great and important and perfect.

So much, then, is what I would add in reply to you, over and above my previous remarks, on the subject of the personal daemon.

<sup>484</sup> There is some textual confusion here. Des Places seems quite misguided to take ὑπερέχουσιν and ἐπάρχουσιν (Gale's sound conjecture for ὑπάρχουσιν of the MSS) as present tense verbs. Instead, one should alter the τῶ of τῶ ὅλῳ γένει to τοῖς.

## X

1 **Δ**είπεται δὲ τελευταῖος ὁ περὶ εὐδαιμονίας λόγος, περὶ οὗ σὺ ποικίλως ἐπεζήτησας, τὰ μὲν πρῶτα ἐπιστάσεις ὑποτείνων ἔπειτα ἀπορῶν 10  
καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα διαπνυθάνομενος. Θέντες οὖν ἕκαστα τῶν σῶν ἥπερ αὐτὰ  
[286] προήγαγες, ἀποκρινόμεθά σοι πρὸς αὐτὰ συμμέτρως. Ἐπέστησας γὰρ | 1  
μήποτε ἄλλη τις λανθάνη οὔσα ἢ πρὸς εὐδαιμονίαν ὁδός· καὶ τίς ἂν γένοιτο  
έτέρα ἀφισταμένη τῶν θεῶν εὐλογος πρὸς αὐτὴν ἄνοδος; εἰ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς  
θεοῖς ἢ οὐσία τῶν ἀγαθῶν ὅλων καὶ τελειότης περιέχεται καὶ ἡ πρώτη  
δύναμις αὐτῶν καὶ ἀρχή, παρὰ μόνοις ἡμῖν καὶ τοῖς ὁμοίως ἔχομένοις 5  
τῶν κρείττωνων γνησίως τε τῆς πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἐνώσεως ἀντιλαμβανομένοις  
ἢ τῶν ἀγαθῶν ὅλων ἀρχή καὶ τελευτή σπονδαίως ἐπιτηδεύεται· ἐνταῦθα  
δὴ οὖν καὶ ἡ τῆς ἀληθείας πάρεστι θέα καὶ ἡ τῆς νοερᾶς ἐπιστήμης, καὶ  
μετὰ τῆς τῶν θεῶν γνώσεως ἢ πρὸς ἑαυτοὺς ἐπιστροφή καὶ ἡ γνώσις  
ἑαυτῶν συνέπεται. 10

2 **Μ**άτην οὖν διαπορεῖς ὥς οὐ δεῖ πρὸς δόξας ἀνθρωπίνας βλέπειν.  
Τίς γὰρ σχολὴ τῷ πρὸς τοῖς θεοῖς τὴν διάνοιαν ἔχοντι κάτω βλέπειν εἰς  
ἀνθρώπων ἐπαίνους; ἀλλ' οὐδὲ τὸ ἐπὶ τούτῳ πρὸς ἔπος ἐπαπορεῖς, ὥς ἡ  
ψυχὴ ἐκ τοῦ τυχόντος ἀναπλάττει μεγάλα. Τίς γὰρ δὴ ἐν τοῖς ὄντως οὔσι  
[287] πλασματῶν ἀρχὴ συνίσταται; οὐχ ἡ μὲν φαν|ταστικὴ δύναμις ἐν ἡμῖν ἐσ- 1  
τιν εἰδωλοποιός, φαντασία δ' οὐδεμία ἐγείρεται τῆς νοερᾶς ζωῆς τελείως  
ἐνεργούσης; οὐ παρὰ τοῖς θεοῖς συννύαρχη ἢ ἀλήθεια κατ' οὐσίαν, ἀλλ'  
οὐχὶ κατὰ συμφωνίαν, ἐνδρυμένη τοῖς νοητοῖς; εἰκὴ τοίνυν τὰ τοιαῦτα καὶ  
παρὰ σοὶ καὶ παρ' ἄλλοις τισὶ θρυλλεῖται. Ἀλλ' οὐδὲ ὅσα ὥς ἀγύρτας καὶ 5  
ἀλαζόνας διασύρουσί τινες τοὺς τῶν θεῶν θεραπευτάς, οἷς καὶ σὺ παρα-  
πλήσια εἴρηκας, οὐδὲν οὐδὲ ταῦτα ἄπτεται τῆς ἀληθινῆς θεολογίας τε καὶ  
θεουργίας. Εἰ δέ ποῦ τινες παραφύονται τοιοῦτοι παρὰ τὰς τῶν ἀγαθῶν

[286].2 ἡ secl. cj. Scott || 5 καὶ<sup>1</sup> V: om. M || 7 ὅλων V: ὅλως M  
|| 8 ἐπιστήμης VM: ἐπιστήμης τελειότης (τελειότης s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 14 οὔσι M  
et (i. m. et si s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: οὐ V || 15 πλασματῶν ] πραγμάτων cj. Vergicius i. m.  
R, Boulliau i. m. U et B<sup>3</sup> || [287].5 θρυλλεῖται VM || 7-9 καὶ — ἐπιστήμης  
M: καὶ φιλοσοφίας ἀλλ' i. m. V<sup>2</sup>; om. V

## BOOK X

1 The last subject for discussion concerns happiness, about which you make various enquiries, first proposing objections and then doubts, and after this you start the interrogation. So taking up these points that you raise, we will answer you appropriately on each one of them. You enquire, then, whether there is not some other road to happiness<sup>485</sup> which we are ignoring; yet what other reasonable mode of ascent to it can there be apart from the gods? For if the essence and accomplishment of all good is encompassed by the gods and their primal power and authority, it is only with us<sup>486</sup> and those who are similarly possessed by the greatest kinds and have genuinely gained union with them that the beginning and the end of all good is seriously practised. It is there, then, that there occurs the vision of truth and intellectual understanding, and with knowledge of the gods follows a turning towards ourselves and knowledge of ourselves.

2 Hence it is futile for you to raise the objection that "it is not necessary to have regard for human opinions." For what leisure could one whose mind is set upon the gods have to look downwards for human approval? Yet not even in your subsequent statement, that "the soul invents grand things on the basis of chance circumstances," do you raise relevant doubts. For what basis for inventions can there be in things which exist in reality? Is it not the imaginative faculty in us which is the creator of images?—yet the imagination is never stirred up when the intellectual life is perfectly active. Does truth not co-exist in its essence with the gods, and not merely in harmony with them, based as it is in the intelligible realm? In vain, therefore, are such allegations bandied about by yourself and some others. And not even those gibes with which some ridicule those who worship the gods as "vagabonds" and "charlatans," the like of which you have put forward, apply at all to true theology or theurgy. Yet if somehow certain things of this kind do arise incidentally in the sciences

<sup>485</sup> That is, other than theurgy.

<sup>486</sup> That is, the Egyptians. "Abamon" is in character here.

ἐπιστήμας (ὥσπερ καὶ παρὰ τὰς ἄλλας τέχνας αἱ κακοτεχνίαι παραβλα-  
στάνουσιν), ἐναντιώτεροι δῆπου αὐταὶ πρὸς αὐτὰς ὑπάρχουσι μᾶλλον ἢ 10  
πρὸς ἄλλο ὅτιοῦν· τῷ γὰρ ἀγαθῷ τὸ κακὸν διαμάχεται μᾶλλον ἢ τῷ μὴ  
ἀγαθῷ.

3 Βούλομαι δὴ τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ἐπιδραμεῖν, ὅσα δια-  
βάλλον τὴν θείαν πρόγνωσιν ἄλλας τινὰς μεθόδους αὐτῇ παραβάλλεις,  
περὶ τὴν τοῦ μέλλοντος προμήνυσιν διατριβούσας. Ἐμοὶ γάρ, οὔτε εἴ τις 15  
[288] ἐκ φύ|σεως ἐπιτηδειότης εἰς σημασίαν τοῦ ἐσομένου παραγίγνεται, ὥσπερ 1  
ἢ τοῖς ζώοις τῶν σεισμῶν ἢ τῶν ἀνέμων ἢ τῶν χειμῶνων συμπίπτει πρό-  
γνωσις, τίμιος εἶναι δοκεῖ· κατ' αἰσθήσεως γὰρ ὀξύτητα ἢ κατὰ συμπά-  
θειαν ἢ κατ' ἄλλην τινὰ φυσικῶν δυνάμεων συγκίνησιν ἢ τοιαύτη ἔμφυτος  
συνέπεται μαντεία, οὐδὲν ἔχουσα σεμνὸν καὶ ὑπερφυές· οὔτε εἴ τις κατὰ 5  
λογισμὸν ἀνθρώπινον ἢ τεχνικὴν παρατήρησιν ἀπὸ σημείων τεκμηριοῦται  
ἐκεῖνα ὧν ἐστὶ τὰ σημεῖα δηλωτικά (ὡς ἀπὸ συστολῆς ἢ φορέας τὸν μέλ-  
λοντα πυρετὸν προγιγνώσκουσιν οἱ ἰατροί), οὐδὲν οὐδὲ οὗτός μοι δοκεῖ  
τίμιον ἔχειν καὶ ἀγαθόν· ἀνθρώπινως τε γὰρ ἐπιβάλλει καὶ συλλογίζεται  
τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ διανοίᾳ, περὶ τε τῶν ἐν τῇ φύσει τοῖς γιγνομένοις ὁμολογου- 10  
μένως οὐ πόρρω τῆς σωματοειδοῦς τάξεως ποιεῖται τὴν διάγνωσιν. Ὡστε  
οὐδ' εἰ φυσικὴ τις ἔνεστιν ἐν ἡμῖν ἐπιβολὴ τοῦ μέλλοντος, ὥσπερ καὶ ἐν  
τοῖς ἄλλοις ἅπασιν ἢ δύναμις ἥδε ἐναργῶς ἐνεργοῦσα διαφαίνεται, οὐ-  
δὲν οὐδὲ αὕτη μακαριστὸν τῷ ὄντι κέκτηται· τί γὰρ ἂν εἴη γνήσιον καὶ  
[289] τέ|λειον καὶ αἰδιὸν ἀγαθὸν τῶν ὑπὸ τῆς φύσεως τῆς ἐν γενέσει εἰς ἡμᾶς 1  
ἐμφυομένων;

4 Μόνη τοίνυν ἡ θεία μαντικὴ συναπτομένη τοῖς θεοῖς ὡς ἀλη-  
θῶς ἡμῖν τῆς θείας ζωῆς μεταδίδωσι, τῆς τε προγνώσεως καὶ τῶν θείων  
νοήσεων μετέχουσα καὶ ἡμᾶς θείους ὡς ἀληθῶς ἀπεργάζεται· ἡ δὲ αὕτη 5  
καὶ τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἡμῖν γνησίως παρέχει, διότι πεπλήρωται τῶν ἀγαθῶν ὅλων  
ἢ μακαριωτάτῃ τῶν θεῶν νόησις· οὐ τοίνυν προορῶσι μὲν, ὡς σὺ τοπά-  
ζεις, οἱ ταύτην ἔχοντες τὴν μαντικὴν, οὐ μὴν εἰσιν εὐδαίμονες· ἀγαθοειδὴς  
γάρ ἐστι πᾶσα ἡ θεία πρόγνωσις· οὐδὲ προορῶσι μὲν τὰ μέλλοντα, χρῆ-  
σθαι δὲ αὐτοῖς καλῶς οὐκ ἐπίστανται· ἀλλ' αὐτὸ τὸ καλὸν καὶ τὴν τάξιν 10

[287].14 παραβάλλεις (ei s. v.) M<sup>2</sup>: παραβάλλης VM || [288].1  
ἐπιτηδειότης M: ἐπιτηδειότης τῷ V; an ἐπιτηδειότης τῷ? || 2 ἡ<sup>1</sup> secl. cj.  
Scott

of the good (just as by the side of other crafts evil skills may spring up), they are without a doubt more especially opposed to those (that are true) than to anything else. For evil is more opposed to the good than to that which is not good.<sup>487</sup>

**3** I would like in the next instance to run through the other slanders which you direct against divine foreknowledge, when you compare it with certain other methods which concern the prediction of future events. For me, not even if there is some instinctive ability from nature for signalling what will be, just as a foreknowledge of earthquakes, wind or storms occurs among animals, does this seem to be worthy of respect. For such an innate faculty of divining occurs according to a keenness of perception or sympathy, or some other movement of natural powers, containing nothing holy or supernatural—any more than, if somebody, through human reasoning or skilled observation, deduces from signs those things which the signs indicate (just as doctors predict an ensuing fever from a spasm or shivering), does he seem to me to possess anything venerable or good. For he conjectures after a human fashion and infers with the aid of our reasoning things which, we all acknowledge, occur naturally, and forms a diagnosis not far removed from the corporeal order. In this way, even if there is within us a certain natural inkling of the future, just as this power is clearly seen to be active in all other animals, this does not, in reality, possess anything which is worthy of celebration. For what could there be which is genuine, perfect and eternally good among us which is implanted by nature within the realms of generation?

**4** Only divine mantic prediction, therefore, conjoined with the gods, truly imparts to us a share in divine life, partaking as it does in the foreknowledge and the intellections of the gods, and renders us, in truth, divine. And this genuinely furnishes the good for us, because the most blessed intellection of the gods is filled with all goods. Hence, those who have this mantic prediction do not, as you conjecture, “have foreknowledge, and yet remain without happiness”—for all divine foreknowledge is patently good—nor do they “foresee the future but do not know how to use this well.” Rather, along with the foreknowledge, they receive Beauty itself, and the order which is both true and

<sup>487</sup> Iamblichus has already enunciated this principle at III.31.178.1-2, when making a similar point.

τὴν ἀληθῆ καὶ πρόπουσαν μετὰ τῆς προγνώσεως παραδέχονται· πάρεστι  
 δ' αὐτῇ καὶ τὸ ὠφέλιμον. Οἱ γὰρ θεοὶ καὶ δύναμιν τοῦ φυλάσασθαι τὰ  
 ἐπιόντα ἀπὸ τῆς φύσεως δεινὰ παραδιδόασιν· καὶ ὅταν μὲν ἀσκεῖν δέῃ τὴν  
 ἀρετὴν καὶ συμβάλληται πρὸς τοῦτο ἢ τοῦ μέλλοντος ἀδηλία, ἀποκρύ- 15  
 πτουνσι τὰ ἐσόμενα ἕνεκα τοῦ τὴν ψυχὴν βελτίονα ἀπεργάζεσθαι· ὅταν δὲ  
 [290] πρὸς | τοῦτο μὴδὲν διαφέρῃ, λυσιτελεῖ δὲ ταῖς ψυχαῖς τὸ προοιγινώσκειν, 1  
 ἕνεκα τοῦ σώζειν αὐτὰς καὶ ἀνάγειν, τὴν ἐν ταῖς μαντείαις πρόγνωσιν ἐν  
 μέσαις αὐτῶν ταῖς οὐσίαις ἐντιθέασιν.

5 Ἀλλὰ τί ταῦτα ἀπομηκύνω, διὰ πολλῶν ἐν τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν τὸ  
 τῆς θείας μαντικῆς πρὸς τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην ἐπιδείξας ὑπερέχον; βέλτιον 5  
 οὖν, ὅπερ ἀπαιτεῖς παρ' ἡμῶν, τὴν εἰς εὐδαιμονίαν ὁδὸν ἐπιδείξαι σοι, καὶ  
 ἐν τίνι κεῖται ἡ αὐτῆς οὐσία· ἀπὸ γὰρ τούτου τό τε ἀληθὲς εὐρίσκεται καὶ  
 ἅμα τὰς ἀπορίας πάσας ἔνεστι διαλύειν ὁραδίως. Λέγω τοίνυν ὥς ὁ θεωτὸς  
 νοούμενος ἀνθρωπος, ἡνωμένος τὸ πρόσθεν τῇ θέᾳ τῶν θεῶν, ἐπεισῆλθεν  
 ἐτέρᾳ ψυχῇ τῇ περὶ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον μορφῆς εἶδος συνηρμοσμένη, καὶ διὰ 10  
 τοῦτο ἐν τῷ τῆς ἀνάγκης καὶ εἰμαρμένης ἐγένετο δεσμῶ.

Σκοπεῖν δὴ δεῖ τίς αὐτοῦ γίγνεται λύσις καὶ ἀπαλλαγὴ τῶν δεσμῶν.  
 Ἔστι τοίνυν οὐκ ἄλλη τις ἢ τῶν θεῶν γνώσις· ἰδέα γάρ ἐστιν εὐδαι-  
 μονίας τὸ ἐπίστασθαι τὸ ἀγαθόν, ὥσπερ τῶν κακῶν ἰδέα συμβαίνει ἡ 5  
 [291] λήθη τῶν | ἀγαθῶν καὶ ἀπάτη περὶ τὸ κακόν· ἡ μὲν οὖν τῷ θείῳ σύν- 1  
 εστιν, ἡ δὲ χείρων μοῖρα ἀχώριστός ἐστι τοῦ θνητοῦ· καὶ ἡ μὲν τὰς τῶν  
 νοητῶν οὐσίας ἱερατικαῖς ὁδοῖς ἀναμετρεῖ, ἡ δέ, παρακρουσθεῖσα τῶν ἀρ-  
 χῶν, προῖησιν ἐαυτὴν ἐπὶ τὴν καταμέτρησιν τῆς τοῦ σώματος ἰδέας· καὶ  
 ἡ μὲν γνώσις ἐστι τοῦ πατρός, ἡ δὲ παραγωγὴ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ καὶ λήθη τοῦ 5

[290].1 λυσιτελεῖ scr. Scott: λυσιτελεῖ VM || 7 τό τε V: τότε τὸ M ||  
 8 τὰς M: τῆς V | θεωτὸς VM: θεατὸς (α s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || [291].3 νοητῶν (θνη  
 p. n., νοη s. v.) V<sup>2</sup>: θνητῶν VM

appropriate—and also present with this is utility. For the gods grant the power of defence against the dangers which menace us from the natural order. And when it is necessary to exercise virtue and an uncertainty of future events contributes to this, then (the gods) conceal what will be for the improvement of the soul. But whenever this (uncertainty) does not matter for this purpose, and foreknowledge rather is advantageous to souls for saving and leading them upwards, then the gods implant in the midst of their essences the foreknowledge inherent in divination.

5 But why do I prolong this topic, when I have already shown by many arguments the superiority of divine prophecy over the human? Better, therefore, is what you ask of us, to point out to you the road to happiness and where its essence lies; for from this the truth shall be discovered and at the same time all doubts may be easily resolved. I say, then, that the man who is conceived of as “divinised,”<sup>488</sup> who once was united to the contemplation of the gods, afterwards came into possession of another soul adapted to the human form, and through this was born into the bond of necessity and fate.

Hence we must consider how one might be liberated and set free from these bonds. There is, indeed, no way other than the knowledge of the gods. For understanding the Good<sup>489</sup> is the paradigm of well-being, just as obliviousness to the Good and deception concerning evil constitute the paradigm of evil things. The one, therefore, is united with the divine, while the other, inferior, destiny is inseparable from the mortal; one measures the essences of intelligibles by sacred methods, while the other, abandoning its principles, gives itself over to the measuring of the corporeal paradigm; one is the knowledge of the Father, the other

<sup>488</sup> This uniquely attested term seems to refer to the disembodied, “pure” human soul, prior to its descent into body. This concept of a second soul, subject to the laws of Fate, is quite remarkable, and in line rather with the doctrine of Numenius (as attested by Porphyry, *On the Faculties of the Soul*, frg. 253 Smith = Numenius, frg. 44 Des Places) than with that of Iamblichus himself; but on the other hand, the “vehicle of the soul” in Iamblichus’s theory, since it survives in the cosmos after disembodiment, might be seen as filling the role of this “second soul.”

<sup>489</sup> We take it that this refers to the Good of Plato’s *Republic*, though one cannot be certain.



προουσίου αὐταρχοῦντος πατρὸς θεοῦ· καὶ ἡ μὲν σώζει τὴν ἀληθινὴν ζωὴν ἐπὶ τὸν πατέρα αὐτῆς ἀνάγουσα, ἡ δὲ κατὰγει τὸν γεναρχοῦντα ἄνθρωπον ἄχρι τοῦ μηδέποτε μένοντος ἀλλ' αἰεὶ ῥέοντος. Αὕτη μὲν οὖν νοείσθω σοι (ἡ) πρώτη τῆς εὐδαιμονίας ὁδός, νοερὰν ἔχουσα τῆς θείας ἐνώσεως ἀποπλήρωσιν τῶν ψυχῶν· ἡ δ' ἱερατικὴ καὶ θεουργικὴ τῆς εὐδαιμονίας 10 ὁδοῖς καλεῖται μὲν θύρα πρὸς θεὸν τὸν δημιουργὸν τῶν ὅλων, ἡ τόπος ἡ αὐλὴ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ· δύνανται δ' ἔχει πρώτην μὲν ἀγνείαν τῆς ψυχῆς πολὺν [292] τελειότεραν τῆς τοῦ σώματος ἀγνείας, | ἔπειτα κατάρτυσιν τῆς διανοίας 1 εἰς μετουσίαν καὶ θεάν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ καὶ τῶν ἐναντίων πάντων ἀπαλλαγὴν, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα πρὸς τοὺς τῶν ἀγαθῶν δοτῆρας θεοὺς ἔνωσιν.

6 Ἐπειδὴν δὲ κατ' ἰδίαν ταῖς μοίραις τοῦ παντός συνάψῃ καὶ ταῖς διηκούσαις δι' αὐτῶν ὅλαις θείαις δυνάμεσι, τότε τῷ ὅλῳ δημιουργῷ τὴν 5 ψυχὴν προσάγει καὶ παρακατατίθεται, καὶ ἐκτὸς πάσης ὕλης αὐτὴν ποιεῖ μόνῳ τῷ αἰδίῳ λόγῳ συνηνωμένην· οἷον, ὃ λέγω, τῇ αὐτογόνῳ καὶ τῇ αὐτοκινήτῳ καὶ τῇ ἀνεχούσῃ πάντα καὶ τῇ νοερᾷ καὶ τῇ διακοσμητικῇ τῶν ὅλων καὶ τῇ πρὸς ἀλήθειαν τὴν νοητὴν ἀναγωγῷ καὶ τῇ αὐτοτελεῖ 10 καὶ τῇ ποιητικῇ καὶ ταῖς ἄλλαις δημιουργικαῖς δυνάμεσι τοῦ θεοῦ κατ' 10 ἰδίαν συνάπτει, ὥς ἐν ταῖς ἐνεργείαις αὐτῶν καὶ ταῖς νοήσεσι καὶ ταῖς δημιουργίαις τελέως ἴστασθαι τὴν θεουργικὴν ψυχὴν. Καὶ τότε δὴ ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ δημιουργικῷ θεῷ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐντίθησιν. Καὶ τοῦτο τέλος ἐστὶ τῆς παρ' Αἰγυπτίοις ἱερατικῆς ἀναγωγῆς.

[291].6 προουσίου M: προοσίου V | αὐταρχοῦντος VM: αὐταρχοῦντος cj. Gale || 9 ἡ add. cj. Scott | τῆς<sup>1</sup> M: om. V || [292].2 πάντων M: πάντως V || 9 τῇ<sup>1</sup> VM: τὴν fec. M<sup>2</sup> | τὴν V: αὐτὴν M | ἀναγωγῷ (vel ἀναγωγικῇ) cj. Gale: ἀναγωγῇ VM || 12 δημιουργίαις scripsi: δημιουργικαῖς VM || 13 δημιουργικῷ M: δημιουργῷ V | τῆς M: τοῖς V

is a departure from him and an obliviousness to the divine Father who is prior to essence and is his own first principle,<sup>490</sup> and the one preserves the true life, leading back to its father, while the other drags down the primordial<sup>491</sup> man to that which is never fixed and always flowing. Know, then, that this is the first road to well-being, having for souls the intellectual plenitude of divine union. But the sacred and theurgic gift of well-being is called the gateway to the creator of all things, or the place or courtyard<sup>492</sup> of the good. In the first place, it has the power to purify the soul, far more perfect than (the power) to purify the body; afterwards, it prepares the mind for the participation in and vision of the Good, and for a release from everything which opposes it; and, at the last, for a union with the gods who are the givers of all things good.<sup>493</sup>

6 And when it has conjoined (the soul) individually to the parts of the cosmos and to all the divine powers pervading them, this leads and entrusts the soul to the keeping of the universal demiurge and makes it external to all matter and united to the eternal logos alone. What I mean is, that it connects the soul individually to the self-begotten and self-moved god, and with the all-sustaining, intellectual and adorning power of the cosmos, and with that which leads up to the intelligible truth, and with the perfected and effected and other demiurgic powers of the god, so that the theurgic soul is perfectly established in the activities and the intellections of the demiurgic powers. Then, indeed, it deposits the soul in the bosom of the demiurgic god as a whole. And this is the goal of (the soul's) sacred ascent according to the Egyptians.

<sup>490</sup> Preserving the αὐταρχοῦντος of the MSS, as against Thomas Gale's unnecessary emendation αὐταρκοῦντος ("self-sufficient"). This is a fairly clear reference to the Neoplatonic One, though couched in Chaldaean terminology.

<sup>491</sup> The remarkable term γεναρχῶν ἄνθρωπος would seem to be a reference to a figure such as the "primal man"—*Anthrôpos*— of various Hermetic texts (*Poimandres* [*Corp. herm.*] 1.12ff.; 4.2; *Asclepius* 7).

<sup>492</sup> For this use of ἀλή cf. Proclus, *Comm. Crat.* 94.7; *Orac. chald.* frg. 202.

<sup>493</sup> We seem to have here a three-stage process of ascent, "purification – participation – union with the divine," analogous to the three stages of theurgic prayer outlined in V.26.

[293] | 7 Αὐτὸ δὲ τὰγαθὸν τὸ μὲν θεῖον ἡγοῦνται τὸν προεννοούμε- 1  
νον θεόν, τὸ δὲ ἀνθρώπινον τὴν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἔνωσιν, ὅπερ Βίττυς ἐκ τῶν  
ἐρμαϊκῶν βίβλων μεθηρμήρευσε. Οὐκ ἄρα παρῆται τοῦτο τὸ μέρος τοῖς  
Αἰγυπτίοις, ὃ σὺ ὑπονοεῖς, ἀλλὰ θεοπρεπῶς παρεδόθη· οὐδὲ περὶ συμ-  
κρῶν οἱ θεουργοὶ τὸν θεῖον νοῦν ἐνοχλοῦσιν, ἀλλὰ περὶ τῶν εἰς ψυχῆς 5  
κάθαρσιν καὶ ἀπόλυσιν καὶ σωτηρίαν ἀνηκόντων· οὐδὲ χαλεπὰ μὲν διαμε-  
λεῶσιν οὗτοι ἄχρηστα δὲ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, ἀλλὰ τοῦναντίον τὰ τῇ ψυχῇ  
πάντων ὠφελιμώτατα· οὐδ' ὑπὸ πλάνου τινὸς φενακίζονται δαίμονος οἱ  
πᾶσι τὴν ἀπατηλὴν καὶ δαιμονίαν φύσιν ἐπικρατήσαντες, ἐπὶ δὲ τὴν νοη-  
τὴν καὶ θεῖαν ἀνενεχθέντες. 10

8 Τοσαῦτά σοι καθ' ἡμετέραν δύναμιν ἀπεκρινάμεθα περὶ ὧν  
ἠπόρησας περὶ τῆς θείας μαντικῆς τε καὶ θεουργίας. Εὐχομαι δὴ οὖν τὸ  
λοιπὸν τοῖς θεοῖς ἐπὶ τῷ τέλει τῶν λόγων, τῶν ἀληθῶν νοημάτων ἐμοί  
[294] τε καὶ σοὶ παρ|έχειν τὴν φυλακὴν ἀμετάπτωτον, εἷς τε τὸν αἰδίου αἰῶνα 1  
τῶν αἰωνίων ἀλήθειαν ἐντιθέσθαι, καὶ τελειοτέρων νοήσεων περὶ θεῶν χο-  
ρηγεῖν μετουσίαν, ἐν αἷς δὴ καὶ τὸ μακαριστὸν τέλος τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἡμῖν  
πρόκειται καὶ αὐτὸ τὸ κῦρος τῆς ὁμονοητικῆς φιλίας τῆς πρὸς ἀλλήλους.

[293].4 δ ] an ὥς? (sed cf. 254, 12) | θεοπρεπῶς ] θεοπρόπως cj. Scott  
|| 8 φενακίζονται VM: φαيناκίζονται (ε p. n., αι s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 9 πᾶσι VM: ἐν  
πᾶσι (ἐν s. v.) V<sup>2</sup> || 10 ἀνενεχθέντες VM: ἀναχθέντες cj. Gale || 12 τε V:  
om. M || [294].2 τῶν cj. Gale: δι' VM

7 Good itself they consider,<sup>494</sup> in its divine aspect, to be the God who transcends intellection,<sup>495</sup> and, in its human aspect, to be union with him, just as Bitys<sup>496</sup> has interpreted it for us from the Hermetic books. But this part (sc. of philosophy) is not, as you suspect, “overlooked” by the Egyptians, but is handed down in an appropriately pious manner. Nor do the theurgists “pester the divine intellect about small matters,” but about matters pertaining to the purification, liberation and salvation of the soul. Neither do they “concern themselves diligently with things which are difficult and yet useless to human beings,” but rather to things which are, of all things, of most benefit to the soul. Nor are they “exploited by some fraudulent daemon,” those men who have conquered the deceitful and daemonic nature, and ascended to the intelligible and the divine.

8 Thus, to the best of our ability, have we responded to the problems you have raised about divine prophecy and theurgy. It remains, therefore, at the end of this discourse, for me to pray to the gods to grant both to me and to you the unalterable preservation of true thoughts, to implant in us the truth of eternal things forever, and to grant to us a participation in the more perfect conceptions of the gods in which the most blessed end of good things is placed before us, along with the sanction of the harmonious friendship between us.<sup>497</sup>

<sup>494</sup> “Abamon’s” Egyptian mitre has slipped one last time here; he should have said “we consider.”

<sup>495</sup> Or simply, “the god previously envisaged,” which would be the normal meaning of *προεννοέω*; but there seems a case for postulating this rather special meaning here.

<sup>496</sup> Cf. VIII.5.267.11–268.1 and note ad loc.

<sup>497</sup> A final put-down of Porphyry—combined, perhaps, with something of an olive branch?



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