

The Eleventh Book

Of the Common Mind to Tat

1. The Mind, O Tat, is of the very Essence of God, if yet there be any Essence of God.
2. What kind of Essence that is, he alone knows himself exactly.
3. The Mind therefore is not cut off, or divided from the essentiality of God, but united as the light of the sun.
4. And this mind in men, is God, and therefore are some men Divine, and their Humanity is near Divinity.
5. For the good Demon called the Gods immortal men, and men mortal Gods.
6. But in the brute Beasts, or unreasonable living wights, the Mind is their Nature.
7. For where there is a Soul, there is the Mind, as where there is Life, there is also a Soul.
8. In living Creatures therefore, that are without Reason, the Soul is Life, void of the perations of the Mind.
9. For the Mind is the Benefactor of the Souls of men, and worketh to the proper Good.
10. And in unreasonable things it co-operateth with the Nature of everyone of them, but in men it worketh against their Natures.
11. For the Soul being in the Body, is straightway made Evil by Sorrow, and Grief and Pleasure or Delight.
12. For Grief and Pleasure flow like Juices from the compound Body, whereinto, when the Soul entereth, or descendeth, she is moistened and tinted with them.

13. As many Souls therefore, as the Mind governeth or overruleth, to them it shows its own Light, resisting their prepossessions or presumptions.

14. As a good Physician grieveth the Body, prepossessed of a disease, by burning or lancing it for health's sake.

15. After the same manner also, the Mind grieveth the Soul, by drawing it out of Pleasure, from whence every disease of the Soul proceedeth.

16. But the great Disease of the Soul is Atheism because that opinion followeth to all Evil and no Good.

17. Therefore the Mind resisting it procureth Good to the Soul, as a Physician health to the Body.

18. But as many Souls of Men, as do not admit or entertain the Mind for their Governor, do suffer the same thing that the Soul of unreasonable living things.

19. For the Soul being a Co-operator with them, permits or leaves them to their concupiscences, whereunto they are carried by the torrent of their Appetite, and so tend to brutishness.

20. And as Brute Beasts, they are angry without reason, and they desire without reason, and never cease, nor are satisfied with evil.

21. For unreasonable Angers and Desires, are the most exceeding Evils.

22. And therefore hath God set the Mind over these, as a Revenger and Reprover of them.

23. Tat: Here, O Father, that discourse of Fate or Destiny which thou madest to me, is in danger to be overthrown; For if it be fatal for any man to commit Adultery or Sacrilege or do any evil, he is punished also, though he of necessity do the work of Fate or Destiny.

24. Hermes: All things, O Son, are the work of Fate, and without it, can no bodily thing, either Good or Evil, be done.

25. For it is decreed by Fate, that he that cloth any evil, should also suffer for it.

26. And therefore he cloth it, that he may suffer that which he suffereth, because he did it.

27. But for the present let alone that speech, concerning Evil and Fate, for at other times we have spoken of it.

28. Now our discourse is about the Mind, and what it can do, and how it differs, and is in men such a one, but in brute Beasts changed.

29. And again, in Brute Beasts it is not beneficial, but in men by quenching both their Anger and Concupiscences.

30. And of men thou must understand some to be rational or governed by reason, and some irrational.

31. But all men are subject to Fate, and to Generation, and Changes, for these are the beginning and end of Fate or Destiny.

32. And all men suffer those things that are decreed by Fate.

33. But rational men, over whom as we said, the Mind bears rule, do not suffer like unto other men, but being free from viciousness, and being not evil, they do suffer evil.

34. Tat: How sayest thou this again, Father? An Adulterer, is he not evil? a Murderer, is he not evil? And so all others.

35. Hermes: But the rational man, O Son, will not suffer for Adultery, but as the Adulterer, nor for Murder, but as the Murderer.

36. And it is impossible to escape the Quality of Change, as of Generation, but the Viciousness, he that hath the Mind, may escape.

37. And therefore, O Son, I have always heard the good Demon say, and if he had delivered it in writing, he had much profited all mankind: For he alone, O Son. As the first born, God, seeing all things, truly spake Divine words. I have heard him say sometimes, That all Things are one thing, Especially Intelligible Bodies, or that all Especially Intelligible Bodies are one.

38. We live in Power, in Act and in Eternity.

39. Therefore a good Mind, is that which the Soul of him is.

40. And if this be so, then no intelligible thing differs from intelligible things.

41. As therefore it is possible, that the Mind, the Prince of all things; so likewise, that the Soul that is of God, can do whatsoever it will.

42. But understand thou well, for this Discourse I have made to the question which thou askest of me before, I mean concerning Fate and the Mind.

43. First, if, O Son, thou shalt diligently withdraw thy self from all Contentious speeches, thou shalt find that in Truth, the Mind, the Soul of God bears rule over all things, both over Fate and Law and all other things.

44. And nothing is impossible to him, no not of the things that are of Fate.

45. Therefore, though the Soul of man be above it, let it not neglect the things that happen to be under Fate.

46. And these thus far, were the excellent sayings of the good Demon.

47. Tat. Most divinely spoken, O Father, and truly and profitably, yet clear this one thing unto me

48. Thou sayest, that in brute Beasts the Mind worketh or acteth after the manner of Nature, co-operating also with their (impetus) inclinations.

49. Now the impetuous inclinations of brute Beasts, as I conceive, are Passions. If therefore the Mind do co-operate with these impetuous Inclinations, and that they are the Passions in brute Beasts, certainly the Mind is also a Passion, conforming itself to Passions.

50. Hermes: Well done, Son, thou askest nobly, and yet it is just that I should answer thee.

51. All incorporeal things, O Son, that are in the Body, are possible, nay, they are properly Passions.

52. Everything that moveth is incorporeal; everything that is moved is a Body, and it is moved into the Bodies by the Mind. Now motion is Passion, and there they both suffer; as well that which moveth, as that which is moved, as well that which ruleth, as that which is ruled.

53. But being freed from the Body, it is freed likewise from Passion.

54. But especially, O Son, there is nothing impassible, but all things are passible.

55. But Passion differs from that which is passible, for that (Passion) acteth but this suffers.

56. Bodies also of themselves do act, for either they are unmovable, or else are moved, and which soever it be, it is a Passion.

57. But incorporeal things do always act, or work, and therefore they are passible.

58. Let not therefore the appellations or names trouble thee, for Action and Passion are the same thing, but that it is not grievous to use the more honourable name.

59. Tat: O Father. Thou has delivered this Discourse most plainly.

60. Hermes: Consider this also, O Son, That God hath freely bestowed upon man, above all other living things, these two, to wit, Mind and Speech, or Reason, equal to immortality.

61. These if any man use, or employ upon what he ought, he shall differ nothing from the Immortals.

62. Yea, rather going out of the Body, he shall be guided and led by them, both into the Choir and Society of the Gods, and blessed Ones.

63. Tat: Do not other living Creatures use Speech, O Father?

64. Hermes: No, Son, but only Voice; now Speech and Voice do differ exceeding much; for Speech is common to all men, but Voice is proper unto every kind of living thing.

65. Tat: Yea, but the Speech of men is different. O Father, every man according to his Nation.

66. Hermes: It is true, O Son, they do differ: Yet as man is one so is Speech one also; and it is interpreted and found the same, both in Egypt, Persia, and Greece.

67. But thou seemest unto me, Son, to be ignorant of the Virtue or Power, and Greatness of Speech.

68. For the blessed God, the good Demon said or commanded the Soul to be in the Body, the Mind, in the Soul, the Word, or Speech, or Reason in the Mind, and the Mind in God, and that God is the Father of them all.

69. Therefore the Word is the Image of the Mind, and the Mind of God, and the Body of the Idea, and the Idea of the Soul.

70. Therefore of the Matter, the subtlest or smallest part is Air, of the Air the Soul, of the Soul the Mind, of the Mind God.

71. And God is about all things, and through all things, but the Mind about the Soul, the Soul about the Air, and the Air about the Matter.

72. But Necessity, and Providence, and Nature, are the Organs or Instruments of the World, and of the Order of Matter.

73. For of those things that are intelligible, every one is but the Essence of them in Identity.

74. But of the Bodies of the whole, or universe, every one is many things.

75: For the Bodies that are put together, and that have, and make their changes into other, having this Identity, do always save and preserve the uncorruption of the Identity.

76. But in every one of the compound Bodies, there is a number.

77. For without number it is impossible there should be consistence or constitution, or composition, or dissolution.

78. But Unities do both beget and increase Numbers, and again being dissolved, come into themselves.

79. And the Matter is One.

80. But this whole World, the great God, and the Image of the Greater, and united unto him, and conserving the Order and Will of the Father, is the fullness of Life.

81. And there is nothing therein, through all the Eternity of the Revolutions, neither of the whole, nor of the parts which doth not live.

82. For there is nothing dead, that either hath been, or is, or shall be in the World.

83. For the Father would have it as long as it lasts, to be a living thing; and therefore it must needs be God also.

84, How therefore, O Son, can there be in God, in the Image of the Universe, in the fullness of Life, any dead things?

85. For dying is corruption, and corruption is destruction.

86. How then can any part of the incorruptible be corrupted, or of God be destroyed?

87. Tat: Therefore, O Father, do not the living things in the World die, though they be parts thereof.

88. Hermes: Be wary in thy Speech, O Son, and not deceived in the names of things.

89. For they do not die, O Son, but as compound Bodies they are dissolved.

90. But dissolution is not death; and they are dissolved, not that they may be destroyed, but that they may be made new.

91. Tat: What then is the operation of Life? Is it not Motion?

92. Hermes: And what is there in the World unmovable? Nothing at all, O Son.

93. Tat: Why, cloth not the Earth seem unmovable to thee, O Father?

94. Hermes: No, but subject to many motions, though after a manner it alone be stable.

95. What a ridiculous thing it were, that the Nurse of all things should be unmovable, which beareth and bringeth forth all things.

96. For it is impossible, that anything that bringeth forth, should bring forth without Motion.

97. And a ridiculous question it is, Whether the fourth part of the whole, be idle: For the word immovable, or without Motion, signifies nothing else, but idleness.

98. Know generally, O Son, That whatsoever is in the World is moved either according to Augmentation or Diminution.

99. But that which is moved, liveth also, yet it is not necessary, that a living thing should be or continue the same.

100. For while the whole World is together, it is unchangeable, O Son, but all the parts thereof are changeable.

101. Yet nothing is corrupted or destroyed, and quite abolished but the names trouble men.

102. For Generation is not Life, but Sense; neither is Change Death, but Forgetfulness, or rather Occultation, and lying hid. Or better thus. For Generation is not a Creation of Life, but a Production of Things to Sense, and making them Manifest. Neither is Change Death, but an Occultation or Hiding of that which was.

103. These things being so, all things are Immortal, Matter, Life, Spirit, Soul, Mind, whereof every living thing consisteth.

104. Every living thing therefore is Immortal, because of the Mind, but especially Man, who both receiveth God, and converseth with him.

105. For with this living wight alone is God familiar; in the night by dreams, in the day by Symbols or; Signs.

106. And by all things cloth he foretell him of things to come, by Birds, by Fowls, by the Spirit, or Wind, and by an Oak.

107. Wherefore also Man professeth to know things that: have been, things that are present, and things to come.

108. Consider this also, O Son, That every living Creature goeth upon one part of the World, Swimming things in Water, Land wights upon the Earth, Flying Fowls in the Air.

109. But Man useth all these, the Earth, the Water, the Air, and the Fire, nay, he seeth and toucheth Heaven by his Sense.

110. But God is both about all things, and through all things, for he is both Act and Power.

111. And it is no hard thing, O Son, to understand God.

112. And if thou wilt also see him, look upon the Necessity of things that appear, and the Providence of things that have been, and are done.

113. See the Matter being most full of Life, and so great a God moved with all Good, and Fair, both Gods, and Demons, and Men.

114. Tat: But these, O Father, are wholly Acts or Operations.

115. Hermes: If they be therefore wholly Acts or Operations, O Son, by whom are they acted or operated, but by God?

116. Or art thou ignorant, that as the parts of the World, are Heaven, and Earth, and Water, and Air; after the same manner the Members of God, are Life, and Immortality, and Eternity, and Spirit, and Necessity, and Providence, and Nature, and Soul, and Mind, and the Continuance or Perseverance of all these which is called Good.

117. And there is not any thing of all that hath been, and all that is, where God is not.

118. Tat: What in the Matter, O Father?

119. Hermes: The Matter, Son, what is it without God, that thou shouldst ascribe a proper place to it?

120. Or what dost thou think it to be? Peradventure some heap that is not actuated or operated.

121. But if it be actuated, by whom is it actuated? For we have said, that Acts or Operations, are the parts of God.

122. By whom are all living things quickened? And the Immortal, by whom are they immortalized? The things that are changeable, by whom are they changed?

123. Whether thou speak of Matter, or Body, or Essence, know that all these are acts of God.

124. And that the Act of Matter is materiality, and of the Bodies corporality, and of Essence essentiality; and this is God the whole.

125. And in the whole, there is nothing that is not God.

126. Wherefore about God, there is neither Greatness, Place, Quality, Figure, or Time; for he is All, and the All, through all, and about all.

127. This Word, O Son, worship and adore. And the only service of God, is not to be evil.