

The Twelfth Book

His Crater or Monas

1. The Workman made this Universal World, not with his Hands, but his Word.
2. Therefore thus think of him, as present everywhere, and being always, and making all things, and one above, that by his Will hath framed the things that are.
3. For that is his Body, not tangible, nor visible, nor measurable, nor extensible, nor like any other body.
4. For it is neither Fire, nor Water, nor Air, nor Wind, but all these things are of him, for being Good, he hath dedicated that name unto himself alone.
5. But he would also adorn the Earth, but with the Ornament of a Divine Body.
6. And he sent Man an Immortal and a Mortal wight.
7. And Man had more than all living Creatures, and the World, because of his Speech, and Mind.
8. For Man became the spectator of the Works of God, and wondered, and acknowledged the Maker.
9. For he divided Speech among all men, but not Mind, and yet he envied not any, for Envy comes not thither, but is of abode here below in the Souls of men, that have not the Mind.
10. Tat: But wherefore, Father, did not God distribute the Mind to all men?
11. Because it pleased him, O Son, to set that in the middle among all souls as a reward to strive for.

12. Tat: And where hath he set it?

13. Hermes: Filling a large Cup or Bowl therewith, he sent it down, giving also a Cryer or Proclaimer.

14. And he commanded him to proclaim these things to the souls of men.

15. Dip and wash thyself, thou that art able, in this Cup or Bowl; Thou that believes," that thou shalt return to him that sent this Cup; thou that acknowledgest whereunto thou wert made.

16. As many therefore as understood the Proclamation, and were baptised or dowsed into the Mind, these were made partakers of Knowledge, and became perfect men, receiving the Mind.

17. But as many as missed of the Proclamation, they received Speech, but not Mind, being ignorant whereunto they were made, or by whom.

18. But their senses are just like to brute Beasts, and having their temper in Anger and Wrath, they do not admire the things worthy of looking on.

19. But wholly addicted to the pleasures and desires of the Bodies, they believe that man was made for them.

20. But as many as partook of the gift of God, these, O Tat, in comparison of their works, are rather immortal than mortal men.

21. Comprehending all things in their Mind, which are upon the Earth, which are in Heaven, and if there be anything above Heaven.

22. And lifting up themselves so high, they see the Good, and seeing it, they account it a miserable calamity to make their abode here.

23. And despising all things bodily and unbodily, they make haste to the One and Only.

24. Thus, O Tat, is the Knowledge of the Mind, the beholding of Divine Things, and the Understanding of God, the Cup itself being Divine.

25. Tat: And I, O Father, would be baptised and drenched therein.

26. Hermes: Except thou first hate thy body, O Son, thou canst not love thy self; but loving thy self, thou shalt have the Mind, and having the Mind, thou shalt also partake the Knowledge or Science.

27. Tat: HOW meanest thou that, O Father?

28. Hermes: Because it is impossible, O Son, to be conversant about things Mortal and Divine.

29. For the things that are, being two Bodies, and things incorporeal, wherein is the Mortal and the Divine, the Election or Choice of either is left to him that will choose; For no man can choose both.

30. And of which soever the choice is made, the other being diminished or overcome, magnifieth the act and operation of the other.

31. The choice of the better therefore is not only best for him that chooseth it, by deifying a man; but it also sheweth Piety and Religion towards God.

32. But the choice of the worse destroys a man, but doth nothing against God; save that as Poms or Pageants, when they come abroad, cannot do any thing themselves, but hinder; after the same manner also do these make Poms or Pageants in the World, being seduced by the pleasures of the Body.

33. These things being so, O Tat, that things have been, and are so plentifully ministered to us from God; let them proceed also from us, without any scarcity or sparing.

34. For God is innocent or guiltless, but we are the causes of Evil, preferring them before the Good.

35. Thou seest, O Son, how many Bodies we must go beyond, and how many choirs of Demons, and what continuity and courses of Stars, that we may make haste to the One, and only God.

36. For the Good is not to be transcended, it is unbounded and infinite; unto itself without beginning, but unto us, seeming to have a beginning, even our knowledge of it.

37. For our knowledge is not the beginning of it, but shews us the beginning of its being known unto us.

38. Let us therefore lay hold of the beginning and we shall quickly go through all things.

39. It is indeed a difficult thing, to leave those things that are accustomable, and present, and turn us to those things that are ancient, and according to the original.

40. For these things that appear, delight us, but make the things that appear not, hard to believe, or the Things that Appear not, are Hard to believe.

41. The things most apparent are Evil, but the Good is secret, or hid in, or to the things that appear for it hath neither Form nor Figure.

42. For this cause it is like to itself, but unlike every thing else; for it is impossible, that any thing incorporeal, should be made known, or appear to a Body.

43. For this is the difference between the like and the unlike, and the unlike wanteth always somewhat of the like.

44. For the Unity, Beginning, and Root of all things, as being the Root and Beginning.

45. Nothing is without a beginning, but the Beginning is of nothing, but of itself; for it is the Beginning of all other things.

46. Therefore it is, seeing it is not from another beginning.

47. Unity therefore being the Beginning, containeth every number, but itself is contained of none, and begetteth every number, itself being begotten of no other number.

48. Every thing that is begotten (or made) is imperfect, and may be divided, increased, diminished.

49. But to the perfect, there happeneth none of these.

50. And that which is increased, is increased by Unity, but is consumed and vanished through weakness, being not able to receive the Unity.

51. This Image of God, have I described to thee, O Tat, as well as I could; which if thou do diligently consider, and view by the eyes of thy mind, and heart, believe me, Son, thou shalt find the way to the things above, or rather the Image itself will lead thee.

52. But the spectacle or sight, hath this peculiar and proper; Them that can see, and behold it, it holds fast and draws unto it, as they say, the Loadstone cloth Iron.