

The Republic Book Notes

The Republic by Plato

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Author/Context

Plato was born in 427 B.C. He came from a family that played a prominent part in Athenian politics. However, he did not join politics, as he was disgusted by its violence and corruption, and sickened by the execution of Socrates (his friend and teacher) in 399 B.C. Inspired by Socrates, Plato dug deep into the nature of ethics, knowledge and virtue, coming to the conclusion that no kingdom would be happy unless philosophers became kings, or kings became philosophers.

Plato founded the Academy in Athens in the late fourth century. It was the first permanent institute devoted to philosophical research and teaching, and it was used as a prototype for all western universities. He was well traveled and was the political advisor to the ruler of Sicily. He died in 347 B.C.

Plato was a student of Socrates and went on to teach many famous people, such as Aristotle, who wrote treatises on everything from poetry to biology, and who was himself the tutor of Alexander the Great. Plato was also an advisor for the king of Syracuse, but this ended in drastic failure and he was eventually exiled from Sicily. His "influence throughout the history of philosophy has been monumental" (Ron Turner) and he is often considered the father of Western philosophy. However, his works also contain mathematics, history and moral and religious aspects. He wrote over twenty philosophical dialogues and thirteen letters. *The Republic*, although a conversation, was divided into dialogues, book by book. The reason for writing philosophy in conversational format is that it allowed Plato to depict Socrates in action. Furthermore, Socratic philosophy can only be realized through question and answer, and thus the dialogue format of Plato's works allows for this philosophical realization and understanding.

In this book, written after Socrates' death, Plato attempts to make the reader feel that Socrates was a true philosopher and not a sophist, as some people claimed. Furthermore, he tries to show the people Socrates' method of teaching, and that he did not take money for his teachings, nor coerce people into believing him. Also, Plato tries to bring across Socrates' claim that the only way in which his wisdom exceeds that of others is that he recognizes the state of his ignorance. Lastly, he is trying to show people that Socrates was trying to live a just life, and that he did not make any assumptions, but instead tried to find out the truth of what a just life is and to live by that truth.

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Plot Summary

Socrates meets with some of his friends and other people. He begins discussing the meaning of justice and whether the just life is better than the unjust life. They first contemplate the meaning of justice, with Cephalus stating that justice is as simple as telling the truth and returning what you receive, Polemarchus stating that justice is giving each his due, and Thrasymachus stating that justice is the advantage of the stronger. Socrates proves each of them wrong and embarks on a discussion to find out what true justice is, and to find out whether the just man is truly happier than the unjust man, or vice versa.

They discuss and establish that justice is in the class of things that ought to be practiced for their own good, as well as for the good of their consequences. However, it could be argued that people are only just because they are afraid of the punishments of injustice. In order to clarify what justice is and what the good life truly consists of, Socrates says that they should look at it on a large scale, using a city as an example, and then examine it on an individual basis. In the city, people will have their basic needs; everything will be shared; there will be a rigid system of educating and bringing up people; and the best of these people, the guardians, will be chosen to guard and rule the city. Also, imitation won't be allowed, and the gods may only be depicted as beautiful, gracious, the originators only of good, never evil.

Then they find that there are four excellences in the city: wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice. If they follow their original example in which the city substitutes for the person, these four excellences must also exist in a person, in the soul. Since they all exist in the soul and can often contradict, it is established that the soul is made up of parts and is not a whole. Also, just as in the city it is assumed that the rational people should rule, it is assumed that in the soul the rational part should rule. Thus justice is "establishing the parts of the soul so that they dominate and are dominated by each other according to nature, injustice so that they rule and are ruled contrary to nature." Book 4, pg. 112, line 444d

Socrates then goes on to state that nobody will be happy until either philosophers become kings, or kings become philosophers. He proves this through much thought and questioning, showing that it is only philosophers that truly love wisdom and are out to seek the truth and accept it. To demonstrate the difficulty of accepting the truth, Socrates tells the story of the cave, where men see only shadows in the dark and assume them to be the truth. When they actually see that the truth is different from what they are used to, they refuse to believe it at first, although they do later.

After this, Socrates goes on to show that there are four types of regimes, listed in the order of most just to least just: aristocracy, timocracy, oligarchy, democracy and tyranny. Then he goes on to say how each develops from the other, and why each is just and/or unjust. Similarly, the men from each era represent the amount of justice in their souls. This in turn proves that the just man is happier than the unjust man.



After all this, Socrates goes on to the story of Er, a story about a man returning from the afterlife and describing it. At the end of the story, he says that because he and his companions have established that the soul is immortal, and because this story speaks about the immortality of the soul, it is even more important for people to be just and seek good and true knowledge in their life. This, in turn, will bring them much happiness in both this life and the afterlife.



Major Characters

Socrates: The main speaker/philosopher in the book, he incites his audience and leads them to follow his chain of thought by asking them leading questions. Here, Socrates is leading the discussion to find out the difference between justice and injustice, and to find out which leads to the better life. He is determined to come up with a final result without leaving any stone unturned. However, he also wants to convince his audience of his findings and answer every single one of their questions to the best of his capabilities. Through his logical reasoning and many examples, he does come to a very convincing conclusion.

Glaucon: One of Socrates' friends who travels with him to the Piraeus, and then attends the entire discussion about justice, the soul, and the good, asking questions to clarify the unclear, and answering questions to further Socrates' dialectic method. He is also extremely interested in finding out what true justice is and what the good life really is, and is willing to pursue this with Socrates all the way to the end.

Thrasymachus: Part of Socrates' audience, he claims that justice is 'the advantage of the stronger.' Although Socrates disagrees with this, he takes up the claim and examines it. Throughout the dialogue, Thrasymachus challenges Socrates several times and often becomes angry because he thinks that Socrates is trying to fool his audience, or ignore a point that will him wrong and prove Thrasymachus right.

Minor Characters

Polemarchus: Cephalus' son. Socrates and Glaucon meet at his house to join others and then attend a festival. This leads to the discussion about justice and the good that is forcefully pursued by Socrates.

Cephalus: A wise old man whom Socrates turns to for advice. Cephalus begins the discussion about happiness in old age, which then leads to a discussion of happiness generally, and then justice and the good life. Unfortunately, he leaves after the first book, so his contribution is very limited.

Charmantides: One of the guests at Polemarchus' house, who becomes part of the audience when Socrates begins deliberating about justice and the good.

Lysias: One of Polemarchus' brothers, who is also at the house when Socrates arrives, and is also part of the audience to the discussion.

Euthydemus: One of Polemarchus' brothers, who is also at the house when Socrates arrives, and is also part of the audience to the discussion.

Clitophon: One of the guests at Polemarchus' house, who becomes part of the audience when Socrates begins deliberating about justice and the good.



Simonides: One of the philosophers Polemarchus quotes when attempting to define justice. According to Simonides, justice is 'giving each his due'.

Adeimantus: One of the people participating in the discussion, who doesn't agree with Socrates that justice is better than injustice. However, Socrates does, through questions and answers, show Adeimantus that his initial judgment was incorrect, and that justice is truly better than injustice.

Delphi: An oracle who speaks only the truth, and who can foretell the future.

Er: Socrates uses the story of Er, a soldier who died in battle, went to the afterworld, and came back, to show how great the rewards for being just are in the afterlife.

Lachesis: One of Necessity's daughters, she resembles the past and is an important part of the story of Er.

Clotho: Necessity's daughter, the past. Clotho is also an important part of the story of Er; she turns the spindle.

Atropos: Another of Necessity's daughters, Atropos resembles the future, and she also turns the wheel of the spindle.



Objects/Places

Piraeus: The place where Socrates and Glaucon go to watch the procession and festivities, after which they meet up with Polemarchus and the others.

Justice: The debate of the whole book. Socrates and the others spend their time deliberating over what justice is, and whether the just life is happier than the unjust life.

City: In order to discover true justice in a person, Socrates builds an imaginary city and determines what justice is there. This is because it is easier to identify and explain things on a large scale than a small one. Thus, he bases the book on the city.

Gods: It is assumed that gods can do no harm or injustice, despite what poets say. The gods also reward the just and punish the unjust, whether in this life or the afterlife.

Wisdom: This comes from good judgment and is one of the four excellences. It is also what creates a philosopher, as philosophers are people who are in love with wisdom.

Courage: Another one of the excellences, it is the power to preserve the opinion of what is and is not to be feared, under all circumstances. The guardians represent courage in the city.

Temperance: Defined as control over certain desires and pleasures, it is another one of the excellences to be found in both the soul and the city. Temperance exists in all people in the city, and its existence is proven by the harmony.

Philosophers: People who love knowledge. Socrates also says that nobody will be happy until either philosophers become kings or kings become philosophers. Also, true philosophers will realize that there is more than human life to be considered.

Sophists: People who preach opinion, as oppose to wisdom, which they say they preach. They are unworthy of philosophy and unsuited to its education.

Cave: Socrates uses the story of the cave to show how people often believe that something is the truth when it is not, and also to show how difficult it is for people to admit that what they have believed is not the truth, but that something else is.

Truth: The search for the truth, and for what is, leads to the definition of the good, which in turn leads to the definition of justice. Socrates and the others conclude that people who see the truth are better than those who don't, and that it is the soul that sees the truth.

Aristocracy: Similar to a kingship, this is found to be the best system of ruling, and the aristocratic man is the best and most just man.

Timocracy/Timarchy: This arises from the aristocracy, and occurs when the aristocracy deteriorates. It has many features similar to aristocracy and many different ones. This is



considered the second best method of rule, and the timocratic man is considered the second best and just.

Oligarchy: This comes about when timocracy deteriorates. It has similar features to timocracy, but it is different to it in many ways.

Democracy: This stems from oligarchy, when people want to get as rich as possible. Although it shares some features with oligarchy, it is very different. It is considered one of the worst methods of rule, and the democratic man is considered rather unjust.

Tyranny: The worst regime, this stems from democracy. It shares some features with democracy, but it is very different. The tyrant is considered the most unjust man, and the unhappiest.

Desires: There are two types of desires: necessary and unnecessary. It is the lack of control over unnecessary desires which make people less just. Desires can be wild, terrible and lawless, and lead people to do unjust things.

Imitation: Not allowed in the city, imitation is considered to be a waste of time and harmful to people, because it makes them feel fake emotions.

Guardians: Protectors of the city and the exhibition of courage in the city. The best guardians will become rulers, alternating their rule. Their upbringing is very rigid, and they are considered to be among the best people in the city.

Quotes

Quote 1: "Age isn't easy for a good man if he's poor, nor will a bad man ever be cheerful with himself even if he's rich." Book 1, pg. 3, line 332

Quote 2: "It keeps him from having to leave life in the fear of owing debts to men or sacrifices to the gods." Book 1, pg. 5, line 331b

Quote 3: "No knowledge considers or prescribes for the advantage of the stronger, but for that of the weaker, which it rules" Book 1, pg. 17, line 342d

Quote 4: that "a just man tries to get the better of his unlike, but not of his like; and unjust man tries to get the better of both." Book 1, pg. 24, line 349d

Quote 5: "What sort of thing is justice compared with injustice?" Book 1, pg. 26, line 351

Quote 6: "It concerns the way we ought to live." Book 1, pg. 28, line 352d

Quote 7: "The arduous things that ought to be shunned for themselves but pursued for profit and a reputation based on appearance." Book 2, pg. 31, line 358

Quote 8: "Justice is practiced only under compulsion, as someone else's good - not our own." Book 2, pg. 33, line 360c

Quote 9: "The unjust man enjoys life better than the just" Book 2, pg. 35, line 362c

Quote 10: "To become a good guardian, a man must be by nature fast, strong, and a spirited philosopher." Book 2, pg. 48, line 376e

Quote 11: "God is the cause only of good." Book 2, pg. 52, line 380c

Quote 12: "The gods shall not be misrepresented as sorcerers who change their shapes or as liars who mislead us in word or deed." Book 2, pg. 54, line 383

Quote 13: "No serious friendship should give even the appearance of going beyond that, to avoid reproaches of lack of education and taste." Book 3, pg. 73, line 403c

Quote 14: "Variety in poetry breeds self-indulgence; in gymnastics, disease: simplicity there puts temperance in the soul; here it puts health in the body." Book 3, pg. 74, line 404e

Quote 15: "Make sure that the city is neither small nor seemingly great, but sufficient and one." Book 4, pg. 90, line 423c

Quote 16: "Power to preserve under all circumstances the right, lawful opinion of what is and is not to be feared" Book 4, pg. 97, line 430



Quote 17: "The desires of the worthless many are controlled by the desires and knowledge of the decent few" Book 4, pg. 98, line 431d

Quote 18: "A person's desires force him to something to reason and he berates himself and gets indignant with the part that forces him, and his spirit allies with reason as though reason and desire were at civil war." Book 4, pg. 107, line 440

Quote 19: "Spirited part preserves through both pleasures and pains the commands of reason about what is and is not to be feared." Book 4, pg. 110, line 442c

Quote 20: "Justice, although it resembles a mirage, is really concerned with internal rather than external activity - with the true self and its business." Book 4, pg. 111, line 443c

Quote 21: Justice is "establishing the parts of the soul so that they dominate and are dominated by each other according to nature, injustice so that they rule and are ruled contrary to nature." Book 4, pg. 112, line 444d

Quote 22: "Each person must tend to the business that accords with his nature." Book 5, pg. 117, line 453b

Quote 23: "The various talents are scattered throughout both sexes, and by nature women take part in all pursuits, as do men, except that in all of them the women is weaker." Book 5, pg. 120, line 455c

Quote 24: "The helpful is beautiful; only the harmful is ugly." Book 5, pg. 122, line 457b

Quote 25: "Shame forbids molesting a parent, and fear warns that the others will rush to the victim's defense as his sons, brothers and fathers." Book 5, pg. 130, line 465b

Quote 26: "Until either philosophers become kings or those now kings and regents become genuine philosophers." Book 5, pg. 138, line 473c

Quote 27: "Philosophers are the ones who can reach what always stays the same in every respect, and non-philosophers the ones who cannot, who wonder among the many things that go in every direction." Book 6, pg. 146, line 484

Quote 28: "Evil is more opposed to the good than to the no-good" Book 6, pg. 154, line 491d

Quote 29: and "great crimes and pure evil come only from vigorous natures perverted by upbringing; a weak nature never does anything great, good or evil." Book 6, pg. 154, line 491e

Quote 30: "[E]ngage in adolescent philosophy and education as boys and young men, and give special attention to their bodies as they grow up, to acquire a helper for philosophy. As the soul begins to mature with the passing years, tighten up its exercise, and when their strength declines and exempts them from military and political duties,



then be turned out to pasture to do nothing - except as a sideline - but practice philosophy, if they're to live happily here and crown their lives when they die with their fitting portion over there." Book 6, pg. 160, line 498b

Quote 31: "When it rests on the place lit by truth and what *is*, it perceives it and knows it and seems to have intelligence. But in the place mingled with darkness, the region of becoming and passing away it darkens and conjectures, changes its opinions up and down and now appears to have no intelligence." Book 6, pg.170, line 508d

Quote 32: "[M]en like that would firmly believe truth to be the shadows of the artificial objects." Book 7, pg. 176, line 515c

Quote 33: "The upward journey and the viewing of the upward world as the soul's ascent to the intelligible." Book 7, pg. 177, line 517b

Quote 34: "A city whose future rulers are the least eager to rule will necessarily be the best governed and freest from strife, and the one with opposite rulers the worst." Book 7, pg. 181, line 520d

Quote 35: "He turned the rule of his soul over to its victory-loving, middle, spirited part and became a high-minded lover of honor." Book 8, pg. 208, line 550b

Quote 36: "Whether or not they're seen for what they are by all gods and men" Book 9, pg. 238, line 580c

Quote 37: "[W]hich more fully *is*: something that partakes of the laws alike, immortal and true, is that way itself, and appears in things like that, or something that partakes of and appear in the never alike and mortal, and is that way itself?" Book 9, pg. 243, line 585c

Quote 38: "The 'phantom' of a tyrant's pleasure must then be a plane number measured on its length - Which raised to its second and then to its third power, will clearly give the distance." Book 9, pg. 246, line 587d

Quote 39: "[I]mitation lies far from the truth and can make all things because it captures only a tiny bit of each one, and that but a phantom." Book 10, pg. 255, line 598b

Quote 40: "When they had been on the meadow seven days, they must get up and march on the eighth, arriving after four more from where they beheld a straight line, like a pillar, stretched from above, all through heaven and earth, most like the rainbow, but purer and brighter. Book 10, pg. 273, line 616b



Topic Tracking: Excellence

Excellence 1: By harming a horse, you decrease his excellence. Thus, by harming a person, you decrease their excellence.

Excellence 2: Anything that has a function also has an excellence. Combined, it can be assumed that everything performs its function only if it has the corresponding excellence, and not evil. Using these hypotheses, Socrates moves on to say that the soul has a function, life, which no other thing can perform. Furthermore, it cannot perform its function if it is deprived of its excellence, justice.

Excellence 3: The guardians' storytellers must be supervised. In particular, no stories should be told where the gods are depicted poorly or heroes are misrepresented. Also, guardians must never be told that gods fight with each other as this may induce fighting between themselves. Thus, the first stories the guardians hear must be well composed for teaching excellence.

Excellence 4: There are four excellences in the city: justice, which is tending your own business, wisdom, temperance, and courage.

Excellence 5: Excellence must be the health and well being of the soul. Socrates says that excellence has one form, but evil has four.

Excellence 6: Excellence of understanding comes from something divine, whereas the other excellences are probably close to the body.

Excellence 7: If people despise money when young, but grow to love it more and more as they grow older and no longer devote themselves to excellence as the best guardian, the power of reasoned, educated speech, leaves them.

Excellence 8: . Because people want more and more possessions, they start wanting more money, and thus honor money more and excellence less. Accordingly, the wealthy become more honored, and the people of excellence less honored. With the majority now money-loving businessmen instead of lovers of victory and honor, the admirable rich men will be put into office, and the poor will be dishonored.

Excellence 9: Moneymakers can convince any person with any excellence left inside of him to become a money-lover by giving him money. In order to prevent this, a law is passed that most voluntary contracts be made at the contractor's own risk.

Excellence 10: The excellence and righteousness for each thing depend solely on the use for which it was created. This naturally means that the user has the most experience of it and must tell the maker how it works best.

Excellence 11: In the afterlife, people are instructed to choose the lives that they will next lead, in which excellence has no master, and they will have more or less of excellence according to how much they honor her.



Topic Tracking: The Good

The Good 1: Socrates claims that knowledge of the good is greater than justice, and yet justice is one of the greatest things of all. He then goes on to say that the "good" is a very ambiguous term and can be interpreted many ways. He attempts to use the analogy of seeing and sunlight in the following manner in order to define the good: even though things are visible, they cannot be seen unless there is sunlight; also, if there is moonlight, our eyes will adjust to allow for the difference. He then tells his audience to think of it as the same with the eye of the soul. "When it rests on the place lit by truth and what *is*, it perceives it and knows it and seems to have intelligence. But in the place mingled with darkness, the region of becoming and passing away it darkens and conjectures, changes its opinions up and down and now appears to have no intelligence." Book 6, pg.170, line 508d

The Good 2: As a result, he concludes that, just as light and seeing should not be regarded as the sun, but as sun-like, knowledge and truth should not be regarded as good, but as good-like. Also, higher honors must be reserved for the state of the good.

The Good 3: Furthermore, the good is not only in knowable things, but also in existence and being; thus, the good is beyond being.

The Good 4: The shape of the good is finally, and with difficulty, seen in the intelligible realm. When it is seen, it must be recognized for what it is, and thus the gods will be recognized and people will feel that it is a man's obligation to act rationally for himself and his community. However, not all people will want to tend to human concerns, as they may keep their new education of the good to themselves.

The Good 5: Also, dialecticians are able to grasp and explain the essence of things, and are able to define the good. This is why it is important for the guardians to study dialectics, because they will understand what the good is, and they must then share it with the rest of the citizens.

The Good 6: After the story of Er, it is concluded that all lives are tolerable, and that it depends on the judgment of the chooser and his knowledge of the good and the bad what the life he chooses will become. Thus, it is important for people to study the good, and realize what it is in their lives, so that they may make a better judgment when choosing their next life.



Topic Tracking: Justice

Justice 1: Cephalus states that justice is as simple as telling the truth and returning what you receive. Socrates disagrees, and, to prove his point, he states the following as an example: if a person receives a weapon from a friend who then becomes insane, would it be just to return that weapon if the friend then asked for it back? In this case, what would be justice - giving him his weapon back or not?, They agree that telling the truth and returning what you receive cannot always be the definition of justice.

Justice 2: Polemarchus states that justice is giving "each his due," thus quoting Simonides, and saying that the weapon should be returned to the owner in the example above. However, Socrates challenges this and Polemarchus agrees that that would be a mistake, and that by "due" perhaps Simonides was referring to doing your friends well. By giving someone his "due," you would also harm your enemy. Thus, justice is helping your friends and harming your enemies.

Justice 3: Socrates questions if friends are people who seem honest or who are honest but don't seem so. To this, he receives the reply that people are expected to love people whom they think are honest and hate those who seem bad. Socrates turns this around by asking about people who make mistakes and think men are honest when they are not, and vice versa; for them, good men are enemies and bad men are friends, and thus justice means helping bad men and harming good ones. However, since it is widely accepted that good men are just and do no wrong, this argument would lead to the conclusion that it is just to injure men who do no wrong; this is the opposite of what Simonides said.

Justice 4: Thrasymachus states that justice is the advantage of the stronger. First, he establishes that justice is what the stronger thinks is to his advantage, rather than what is to his advantage. Then, through considering the function of medicine and comparing it to justice, he establishes that "no knowledge considers or prescribes for the advantage of the stronger, but for that of the weaker, which it rules" Book 1, pg. 17, line 342d. This, in turn, means that no ruler rules for his own advantage, but for that of his subjects. Having his words turned around, Thrasymachus is angry and makes the statement that in any partnership the unjust person always gets the better of the just in every way. The perfect form of injustice is one that brings happiness to the possessor and misery to others: tyranny. He then goes on to say that the reason men condemn injustice is because they fear suffering it, not committing it. Therefore, he concludes that injustice is stronger and freer than justice, yet justice is the advantage of the stronger.

Justice 5: Just men have been shown to be wiser and more capable of acting together. However, there must be a little justice in unjust men, since they are not unjust towards each other, as they can be "partners in crime."

Justice 6: Combined, it can be assumed that everything performs its function only if it has the corresponding excellence, and not evil. Using these hypotheses, Socrates moves on to say that the soul has a function, life, which no other thing can perform.



Furthermore, it cannot perform its function if it is deprived of its excellence, justice. This means that a person with a bad soul will rule and manage badly, and one with a good soul will do these things well. Also, it means that the just man will live well, and the unjust man will live badly. Thus, the just man is happy, and the unjust man unhappy. This proves that injustice is never more profitable than justice, since it brings misery.

Justice 7: Socrates says that justice is in the most beautiful class of all: the class of things we choose to have for their own sake and for the sake of their consequences.

Justice 8: Glaucon says that "justice is practiced only under compulsion, as someone else's good - not our own." Book 2, pg. 33, line 360c

Justice 9: Thus, Adeimantus concludes, there is absolutely no reason to prefer justice to injustice. He then asks Socrates what strategy he would use to convince a man who had all the power and means to be unjust, to respect justice. Furthermore, he asks Socrates to show what good justice does to its possessor, and what evil injustice does to him or her.

Justice 10: Socrates says that it would make defining justice and defending it easier if they examined justice on a larger scale, and then in the individual. He then recommends that they examine justice in the state first, by watching a city coming into being and identifying justice and injustice as they accordingly come into being.

Justice 11: One of the excellences in the city is justice, and they come to find that this is simply tending your own business. This is because this, in turn, will lead to wisdom, temperance, and courage. Furthermore, since it was decided that each man is only truly good at one thing, if a person tries to meddle in affairs that are not his own, he will be doing something without any skill. This will lead to weakness in the city and eventually the city's death. Doing something that can harm the city is doing something wrong, and therefore doing injustice. By turning this around, it can be found that justice would be minding your own business. However, to examine justice on the individual level, it must first be found whether the soul has the same three levels as the city. Since the attributes of a city must arise from its people, it can safely be assumed that individuals do have these same levels.

Justice 12: It is established that "justice, although it resembles a mirage, is really concerned with internal rather than external activity - with the true self and its business." Book 4, pg. 111, line 443c Accordingly, a just person will first ensure that he is just, and that all his internal affairs are in accordance with justice, prior to engaging in external affairs.

Justice 13: Justice is "establishing the parts of the soul so that they dominate and are dominated by each other according to nature, injustice so that they rule and are ruled contrary to nature." Book 4, pg. 112, line 444d

Justice 14: It is now granted that justice is good because of itself, and that it belongs to the soul. Also, it is said that justice does give a good reputation, and that the gods know who is truly just and who is unjust, love the just and hate the other. The people whom

the gods love will have the best lives, with the best of everything always available to them.

Justice 15: If we do believe in the afterlife, and practice justice accordingly, we will win the prize for justice both in this world and in the thousand-year journey.



Topic Tracking: Knowledge

Knowledge 1: Older people have more knowledge about life than younger people, as they have already lived through most of life. There is much to be learned from them.

Knowledge 2: One of the excellences is wisdom, but this comes from good judgment, which is clearly a kind of knowledge. Thus, men make good judgments because of knowledge rather than ignorance.

Knowledge 3: Knowledge and opinion are both powers. Knowledge pertains to what is, and opinion to conjectures. Since knowledge is what *is* and opinion cannot be what *is not*, but also cannot be what *is*, opinion must be in between. Through this, it can be seen that lovers of beautiful things, without seeing the beauty itself, are lovers of opinion; whereas those who embrace each thing itself that *is* are philosophers.

Knowledge 4: Knowledge is greater than justice. However, it is knowledge of the good that is great.

Knowledge 5: Just as light and seeing should not be regarded as the sun, but as sun-like; knowledge and truth should not be regarded as good, but as good-like.

Knowledge 6: It is only the philosopher who combines knowledge with experience. Judgment by argument is a tool of wisdom, and thus only the philosopher will be able to practice this. Since experience, knowledge and argument are what determine what is the best life, and the philosopher practices all three, his life must be the best.

Knowledge 7: Socrates states that ignorance and lack of knowledge are an empty state of the soul, whereas nourishment and intelligence fill the soul.



Book 1

Socrates tells that he and his companions went to the Piraeus to watch the procession and festival for the goddess with Glaucon, and that Polemarchus, Cephalus' son, saw them and wanted them to stay longer. After informing Glaucon and Socrates of the continuing festivities and horse races to be held that evening, they agreed to stay.

However, prior to the festivities, they went to Polemarchus' house, where they found his two brothers, Lysias and Euthydemus, as well as Thrasymachus, Charmantides, Clitophon, and Cephalus. Cephalus tell Socrates that he should visit them more often, and also tells him how much he enjoys good conversation. However, he is very old and is unable to travel and see Socrates. Socrates agrees to start visiting more often, saying that older people have more knowledge about life than younger people. He enjoys speaking with them more, as they have already lived through most of life, and there is much to be learned from them.

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 1

He then proceeds to ask Cephalus whether his journey through life was hard or not. To this, Cephalus answers that, whereas many of his friends complain about old age and not being about to do youthful things, he believes that they make old age a burden, and that old age is in fact not a burden, but instead a relief from bodily desires. He goes on to justify this by saying that if old age was really a bad experience, everybody would be complaining about it, but since he has friends who are most definitely enjoying their old age more than they enjoyed their youth, when people say that old age is a bad experience they are only stating an opinion, and not a fact.

To further the conversation, Socrates says that it is easy for Cephalus to speak that way since he has the luxury of being wealthy, and that other people might be less comfortable in old age if they didn't have money; thus they would disagree with him. To this, Cephalus replies that there are certainly people who would disagree with him, but that "age isn't easy for a good man if he's poor, nor will a bad man ever be cheerful with himself even if he's rich." Book 1, pg. 3, line 332

Socrates then asks Cephalus if he inherited his money or made it himself. He asks this because he presumes, through observation, that people who inherit money are not as fond of it as those who make it themselves, and it is obvious to him that Cephalus is not overly fond of money. Also, self-made people cannot stop talking about money, whereas Cephalus does not speak of it much. Cephalus admits that he inherited most of his fortune, then goes on to answer Socrates' question as to what the greatest good he has enjoyed from being rich is. He says that when a man reaches old age, he begins to think of all the injustices he has done in his life, and begins to worry about dying and being punished for them. Thus, he says, for a reasonable man the greatest value of wealth is that it helps him avoid unintentional cheating or lying. It "keeps him from having to leave life in the fear of owing debts to men or sacrifices to the gods." Book 1, pg. 5, line 331b



In response to this, Socrates asks Cephalus whether he truly thinks that justice is as simple as telling the truth and returning what you receive. To prove his point, he offers the following as an example: if a person receives a weapon from a friend who then becomes insane, would it be just to return that weapon if the friend asked for it back? In this case, what would be justice - giving him his weapon back or not? The two men then agree that telling the truth and returning what you receive cannot be the definition of justice.

Topic Tracking: Justice 1

However, Cephalus goes to prepare the sacrifice for the festival, and Polemarchus continues the conversation, saying that justice is giving "each his due," thus quoting Simonides, and saying that the weapon should be returned to the owner in the example above. However, Socrates challenges this, and Polemarchus agrees that that would be a mistake. By "due," perhaps Simonides was referring to doing well to your friends. By giving each person his "due," you would also harm your enemy. Thus, justice is helping your friends and harming your enemies.

Topic Tracking: Justice 2

Socrates then questions: are friends people who seem honest, or people who are honest but don't seem so? To this, he receives the reply that people are expected to love people that they think are honest, and hate those who seem bad. Socrates turns this around by asking about people who make mistakes and think men are honest when they are not, and vice versa. For them, good men are enemies and bad men are friends, and thus justice means helping bad men and harming good ones. However, since it is widely accepted that good men are just and do no wrong, this argument would lead to the conclusion that it is just to injure men who do no wrong; this is the opposite of what Simonides said.

Topic Tracking: Justice 3

Now Socrates backtracks and redefines a friend as a good man and an enemy as a bad man. Furthermore, he assumes that justice is helping a friend if he's good and harming an enemy if he's bad. Now, Socrates asks Polemarchus if a just man ever harms anyone. Polemarchus says that just men do harm bad enemies. Socrates now challenges that by comparing justice, a human excellence, to the excellence of a horse. By harming a horse, you decrease his excellence. Thus, by harming a person, you decrease their excellence.

Topic Tracking: Excellence 1

However, it does not make sense that a good person makes other people bad, just as it does not make sense that "cooling is a function of heat." Thus, harm can't be a function of the good person, but a function of the opposite, the unjust person. It has thus been proved that it is never just to harm someone. Simonides, the wise man, must have never said that.



Fed up with all the "foolishness," Thrasymachus jumps in angrily and asks Socrates what, precisely, he thinks justice is. Socrates tells him not to be angry since they are trying their best to figure out what justice is, just as they would be trying their best to figure out where gold is. However, since justice is more important than gold, they are searching even harder. Thus they deserve pity and help from Thrasymachus, not anger and resentment. Thrasymachus gets even angrier and accuses Socrates of never speaking what he thinks but only refuting what others think. He finally agrees to speak of what justice is if Socrates will pay him. Since Socrates has no money, Glaucon jumps in and says that all of the others will contribute to the cost of Thrasymachus' speaking. After further accusing Socrates of never teaching, but instead learning from others and never paying them thanks (Socrates says that he thanks people by praising them), Thrasymachus goes on to state that justice is the advantage of the stronger.

Topic Tracking: Justice 4

Then, Thrasymachus asks Socrates for praise. However, Socrates first wants to understand exactly what Thrasymachus means, and so he looks into his statement.

First, he establishes that justice is what the stronger thinks is to his advantage, rather than what is to his advantage. Then, through considering the function of medicine and comparing it to justice, he establishes that "no knowledge considers or prescribes for the advantage of the stronger, but for that of the weaker, which it rules" Book 1, pg. 17, line 342d. This, in turn, means that no ruler rules for his own advantage, but rather rules for that of his subjects. Having his words turned around, Thrasymachus is angry and states that in any partnership the unjust person always gets the better of the just in every way. The perfect form of injustice is the one that brings happiness to the possessor and misery to others: tyranny. He then goes on to say that the reason men condemn injustice is because they fear suffering it, not committing it. Therefore, he concludes that injustice is stronger and freer than justice, yet justice is the advantage of the stronger.

After saying this, he makes to leave. However, the others stop him from leaving and demand that he explain himself. Socrates says that he doesn't agree that injustice is more profitable than justice. He then asks him if he thinks that rulers of cities truly rule freely. Thrasymachus says that he believes that they do. Socrates then begins examining all other professions, coming to the conclusion that professionals provide benefits to others and practice the skill of wage earning, and that the wage is the benefit to the professional. Despite this, it appears that rulers do not benefit themselves as they do not earn wages, and this leads to the question of what makes the best men choose to rule. To this, he answers that the best men rule because it is better for them to accept such a position than to wait for the ruling position to be thrust upon them. Should they choose not to rule, they would have to be ruled by an inferior, and that is unacceptable. Thus, it is fear and necessity that forces them to rule for no benefit of their own. Despite this reasoning, the philosophers believe that they have not reached a conclusion, and so address the issue from a different standpoint.



Socrates starts again with Thrasymachus' view that perfect injustice is more profitable than perfect justice. Thrasymachus now defines justice as noble, good nature, and he defines injustice as good judgment. He then goes on to say that "a just man tries to get the better of his unlike, but not of his like; and unjust man tries to get the better of both."Book 1, pg. 24, line 349d However, through examination of other professions, such as medicine and music, and with Thrasymachus' agreement at each stage, Socrates proves that a just man is wise and good and an unjust man is bad and ignorant, which is contrary to what Thrasymachus asserted.

After some argument, Socrates asks Thrasymachus the same question again: "What sort of thing is justice compared with injustice?"Book 1, pg. 26, line 351 As an example, he questions whether an unjust city would enslave other cities and succeed in getting them under control. Thrasymachus answers this question by saying that that is exactly what such a city would do. Socrates then questions whether it is injustice or justice that a city needs to accomplish this. He begins by examining whether it needs injustice. In doing this, he concludes that in an unjust city everybody is unjust. Thus there will be disagreement in the city's army, and the soldiers will hate each other and be unable to ally against opponents. Furthermore, they will be unsettled inside themselves, since they are unjust, and they will also be enemies of the gods. On the other hand, just men have been shown to be wiser and more capable of acting together. However, there must be a little justice in unjust men, since they are not unjust towards each other: they can be 'partners in crime.'

Topic Tracking: Justice 5

The happiness of just men must be considered further, according to Socrates, since "it concerns the way we ought to live"Book 1, pg. 28, line 352d. First, through examples, he defines the function of a thing as something that can either be done *only* by it, or *best* by it. Also, he states that anything that has a function also has an excellence. If we combine these two assumptions, it can be assumed that everything performs its function only if it has the corresponding excellence and not evil. Using these hypotheses, he moves on to say that the soul has a function, life, which no other thing can perform. Furthermore, it cannot perform its function if it is deprived of its excellence, justice.

Topic Tracking: Excellence 2

This means that a person with a bad soul will rule and manage badly, and one with a good soul will do these things well. Also, it means that the just man will live well, and the unjust man will live badly. Thus, the just man is happy, and the unjust man unhappy. This proves that injustice is never more profitable than justice, since it brings misery.

Topic Tracking: Justice 6

However, Socrates is disappointed, for although he knows that justice is wisdom and excellence, and is more profitable than injustice, he still doesn't know what justice is.



Book 2

Although Socrates thinks that the discussion is over, Glaucon continues it, asking Socrates in which class of things he would place justice: things we choose to have for their own sake, for their sake and the sake of their consequences, or for the sake of their consequences only. To this, Socrates answers that justice is in the most beautiful class of all: the class of things we choose to have for their own sake and for the sake of their consequences.

Topic Tracking: Justice 7

To this, Glaucon answers that most people think otherwise and would classify justice with "the arduous things that ought to be shunned for themselves but pursued for profit and a reputation based on appearance." Book 2, pg. 31, line 358 He also says that he isn't impressed by the discussion. He wants to know what justice and injustice are, and what power they each have by themselves in the soul. Thus, he proposes to first present the popular view of the nature and origin of justice, then show that all who practice it do so unwillingly, and do so because they think of it as a necessity and not a good. Finally, he says that he will argue that this attitude is reasonable since people generally think that the unjust life is better than the just life. He says he does not believe in these views; the reason he is doing this is because he would like to hear justice defended and believes that Socrates can do that better than anybody else.

With this in mind, he begins by saying that people believe that injustice is good to inflict but bad to suffer. Through experience, people determine that the negative effects of suffering it are greater than the positive effects of inflicting it, and therefore they make a pact to stop inflicting or suffering it. As a result, they made laws and called whatever the laws dictated justice. This, he believes, is the essence and origin of justice, which ended up being a midway or compromise, and is thus not cherished as a good but honored out of inability to do wrong. The result is that a real unjust man would never make a pact with anyone because he wouldn't be able to trust him or her.

He then continues, intending to prove that people are only just because they have to be. To do this, he tells the story of a shepherd who once served a king. One day, when an earthquake occurred, a chasm was opened where he was herding sheep, and he went into it and found a bronze horse with windows in it. He looked in and found the body of a man, wearing a golden ring. He took the ring and left. Later, when he was in a meeting with fellow shepherds, he happened to turn the setting of the ring toward him. Suddenly, he became invisible, and the others started to speak of him as if he wasn't there. After experimenting further, he came to the realization that the ring could make him invisible at will. Thus, he used it to become messenger to the king, seduce the queen, murder the king, and then take the throne. Glaucon says that should there be two rings like this, one given to a just man and one to an unjust man, the just man would not have the will to resist the opportunities, and thus, nobody is willingly just. Furthermore, he says that "justice is practiced only under compulsion, as someone else's good - not our own." Book 2, pg. 33, line 360c



Topic Tracking: Justice 8

This shows that everyone really believes that injustice pays better than justice. After this, Glaucon compares the life of a perfectly just man to that of a perfectly unjust man. He again comes to the conclusion that "the unjust man enjoys life better than the just" Book 2, pg. 35, line 362c.

The conversation then moves on to a discussion that the whole hypothesis is based on the rewards of appearance and a good reputation, whereas the gods reward those who are truly just and punish those who are unjust. However, it is generally believed that the gods often grant misfortune and evil lives to good men while evil men are happy and successful. Furthermore, priests and soothsayers charge large fees for making others' lives better, erasing sins, and making enemies suffer, and only the rich can afford these people. With stories like these floating around, it is difficult to remain just, especially when perceived as unjust. Therefore, people go about attempting to appear just, regardless of what they truly are.

However, it is difficult to appear just. People realize this and, in order to cover their true selves and intentions, form gangs and political societies. They can also have professors teach them techniques for swaying a jury and speaking persuasively. In the end, they will take everything they want. When told that the gods cannot be fooled, they simply answer that there is no proof that such gods exist and so they should not be concerned with the gods. However, should they exist, they can be persuaded to forgive them through feasts and offerings, according to hearsay and the poets, the same people who say that the gods exist. Thus, either way, divine punishment is not something they should be worrying about.

Thus, Adeimantus concludes, there is absolutely no reason to prefer justice to injustice. He then asks Socrates what strategy he would use to convince a man who had all the power and means to be unjust, to respect justice. He also asks Socrates to show what good justice does to its possessor, and what evil injustice does to him or her.

Topic Tracking: Justice 9

To this, Socrates replies that although it will be a very difficult task, he is willing to try. He begins by creating the following scenario for his audience and asking them if it is true: if a man with poor eyes was asked to read something small at a distance, and he noticed it written larger somewhere else, would he not read the larger one first and then examine the smaller one to see if it was the same? His audience agrees that it is true. Similarly, he says that it would make defining justice and defending it easier if they examine justice on a larger scale, and then in the individual. He then recommends that they examine justice in the state first, by watching a city coming into being and identifying justice and injustice as they accordingly come into being.

Topic Tracking: Justice 10

Primarily, they agree that a city comes into being because individuals are not self-sufficient. Thus, many people come together to provide for each other, creating a



settlement called a city. With this in mind, it can be inferred that people share their products with others because they think such an action is for their own good. Considering just the necessities, a city would be comprised of a farmer for food, a carpenter for shelter and a weaver for clothes. Then they add a few other craftsmen, such as a shoemaker, to help provide for the needs of the body. Thus, the absolutely necessary city will consist of four or five people, where each person has a certain skill and provides the fruits of that skill to everybody in the city. However, he must tend to his skill all of the time, and thus there must be other people in the city to make the tools that he needs, such as a plow for the farmer, and shepherds to provide wool for the weaver. Also, it will be impossible to found this city in a place where it doesn't need imports, therefore servants are needed to bring in the imports. However, they must have something to trade them for. With this in mind, the city must produce surpluses to sell to other cities. Thus trade comes into existence. People within the city will also start trading, and a marketplace with currency will be built. However, the skilled workers must not waste their time, and therefore retailers are needed, as are wage-earners (slaves).

However, the source of injustice cannot be found. Therefore, Socrates goes on to describe what the people will have - the basics of food and clothing. Glaucon stops him and says he is creating a city for pigs, with the bare necessities and no luxuries. Socrates agrees and says that Glaucon is right in assuming that the bare necessities will not be enough for some people. He adds luxuries, such as couches, paintings and the like. Due to this, the city will need to expand, and hairdressers, doctors and teachers, as well as other professionals, will come into existence. Because of this expansion, the city will have to gain land from its neighbors and will soon be at war. Thus, the origin of war is found: the desire for possessions.

This means that the city will need an army, since it has already been established that each man is only good at one skill, and warfare is a skill. Through examining the nature of a dog, hostile to strangers, and loving to people they know, they realize that dogs judge things as hostile or friendly only through knowledge and ignorance. Thus, they must love knowledge. Also, since dogs are the best guardians of people they love, the guardians of the city must also love knowledge, and people who love knowledge are philosophers. Therefore, "to become a good guardian, a man must be by nature fast, strong, and a spirited philosopher." Book 2, pg. 48, line 376e After establishing what the guardian's basic character must be like, Socrates and his companions go on to discuss the nature of the upbringing and education of the guardian, as this may help them find the roots of justice and injustice. They come up with the time-tested formula: physical training for the body and poetry for the soul. However, since children are impressionable and many stories are false, the stories that are told to these children must be supervised. Also supervised must be the storytellers. In particular, no stories must be told where the gods are depicted poorly, or heroes are misrepresented. Also, guardians must never be told that gods fight with each other, as this may induce fighting between themselves. Thus, the first stories the guardians hear must be well composed for teaching excellence.

Topic Tracking: Excellence 3



As for the gods, they must always be represented as their true selves, and since they are truly good, that is how they must be depicted. Since good things cannot be harmful, gods do no harm. Since they do no harm, they could not possibly do any evil, and what does no evil could not possibly be the cause of any evil. Therefore, gods are the cause of what is good, not what is evil. However, since evil exists, it has to have another cause. With this in mind, no ill-spoken words about the gods will be tolerated in the city. Should poets speak about gods punishing people, they must justify the actions of the gods, and show that the people deserved it. This leads to the first law of the city: "God is the cause only of good." Book 2, pg. 52, line 380c

Furthermore, since gods are the ultimate in beauty and perfection, they would never change themselves into something else, since everything else is worse than they are. Also, since they are the most powerful, nothing else can change them. These two facts lead to the conclusion that gods never change shape or form. Therefore, any poet who says they do must be lying. Also, since gods are all-knowing, they do not need to create fiction about the past in order to achieve an end; therefore, gods would never lie. This leads to the second law of the city: "the gods shall not be misrepresented as sorcerers who change their shapes or as liars who mislead us in word or deed." Book 2, pg. 54, line 383

Book 3

Having established the respect people will have from childhood for the gods and their parents, the source of bravery must next be established. In order to be brave, people must not be afraid of death. Thus, writings about the afterlife must also be supervised and censored, and strong people must not mourn the dead in poetry as this shows weakness. Also, violent laughter should be discouraged, and scenes that show worthy people overcome with laughter should be censored, as should any scenes showing people lying. Furthermore, any citizen caught lying in the city will be punished for introducing a deadly practice that can destroy the city. However, rulers may lie on account of enemies or citizens to benefit the state. Beyond this, the young must be temperate, and thus obedient to rulers, and rule themselves with respect to food, drink and sex. Therefore, poets like Homer, who depicts the gods as weak, with no restraint over their own bodies, sleeping with each others' wives, must be censored; so must any other poetry depicted gods incorrectly.

As for the method of storytelling, the philosophers come to the conclusion that no storyteller must ever imitate the people or objects about whom he is telling the story. This is because people will only imitate things that are better than they, and if somebody imitates something else, it means that he is worth less than that other thing, thus decreasing his self-worth. Furthermore, since everybody is only truly good at one thing, the storyteller cannot imitate the people the way they truly are, as they are experts in their field and he is not. For this reason, even though it is less entertaining, it is prohibited to imitate anything when storytelling. Storytellers must be austere and cheerless, yet they will be beneficial.

Now the men study the lyrics of poetry. Since lyrics consist of three things, words, melody and rhythm, each one is considered separately. The modes to be used are quickly established as two: that of a brave man and that of a man in peaceful voluntary activities. In this manner, only modes useful to warriors are used. Thus, only two instruments, the lyre and the zither, are needed. As for rhythm, only gracefulness is allowed, as it attends good rhythm. This means that awkwardness is bad, and therefore should not be allowed in any crafts in the city. Thus, all craftsmen should only produce beautiful, graceful pieces of work. Since all the guardians will learn poetry, and since all poetry will be beautiful and good, they will be able to recognize poorly-made works. However, the guardians will never be musical until they have harmony in their souls. Thus, since they have harmonious, beautiful souls, they will never love anybody who does not have a harmonious soul. However, since excessive pleasure is just as bad as excessive pain, and sex is the ultimate in pleasure, it must be forbidden that "no serious friendship should give even the appearance of going beyond that, to avoid reproaches of lack of education and taste." Book 3, pg. 73, line 403c

After poetry, the guardians must be trained physically. With the belief that the good soul makes the body as good as it can be in mind, the discussion presents that the guardians must not get drunk and must have a simple diet, consisting of roast meat, and no sweets. Thus, it is put that "variety in poetry breeds self-indulgence; in



gymnastics, disease: simplicity there puts temperance in the soul; here it puts health in the body." Book 3, pg. 74, line 404e

As for judges, they must be healthy and old. The reasons for this are that if they are healthy, then they must have good souls. However, if they have good souls, they must be old to be wise. This is because having a good soul means that a person does little evil. Thus, in order to become acquainted with evil and injustice, they must have been exposed to it. Because of this, the older a person is, the more injustice he has been exposed to, and the wiser he is.

To choose the ruler of the city, men must choose among the best people in the city: the guardians. Next, it must be decided which guardians should rule and which should be ruled. The first step is to say that the older should rule the younger, as they are wiser, and that the rulers must be the best of the guardians. Also, people protect things they love better than those that they don't love; therefore, the guardian must love the city. In order for him to love the city, the needs of the city must coincide with his own needs. Therefore, the lives of the guardians must be examined, and those who have shown that they do what is advantageous for the city, and who refuse to do anything harmful, must be considered. Thus, throughout their lives, they must be set difficult tasks to measure their loyalty.

In order to make the citizens care about each other even more, Socrates proposes telling them an old Phoenician lie: that all their training and upbringing was a dream, and that when the gods formed them at birth, he mixed gold into the guardians, silver into the auxiliaries, and iron and bronze into the farmers and craftsmen. However, they are all brothers, and their offspring need not be of the same metal as them. When they do find out what metal is in the soul of their offspring, they must demote or promote him or her accordingly. In this manner, their concern for the city and each other will increase.

However, in order to prevent jealousy among the citizens, there will be no private property beyond the bare necessities. Nobody will have a house or treasure that isn't open to all. Citizens will have a common life and eat in a common place. They will be told that because of the divine metals in their souls, they have no human needs. It will be forbidden to touch or handle silver or gold. If they ever possess houses, money or land, they will become farmers and enemies to the rest of the citizens, and they will remain hated.

Book 4

At this point, Adeimantus interrupts and asks Socrates what he would say if his people were not happy, as it would be the fault of the city that does not allow them money to travel, or mansions, or treasure and jewelry. Socrates replies that he is trying to mold a city where most of the population is happy, and not where there are a few people who are extraordinarily happy. Furthermore, the reason the city came into existence was for justice, not pleasure and happiness. Also, Socrates examines the effect of wealth on craftsmen, and states that if a potter gets rich, he will not be concerned for his craft and will become lazy and a bad potter; whereas if he remains poor, he cannot afford the tools needed to become a good potter. Thus, both wealth and poverty cause bad work and workmen, and it should be the duty of the guardians to prevent these from coming into the city.

With respect to the actuality of war, Socrates says that the athletes of this city will be better trained to fight a war than that of rich cities, where the warriors will be rich and lazy. Furthermore, since they are not interested in gold, they can easily lure one city into joining them if they have to fight another, by saying that all the material rewards will be given to those who help them. However, there should be no wars within the city. Therefore, when the city reaches its maximum capacity without fighting the rulers should fix it as its limit and let everybody else go. In this case, the command to the guardians will be: "make sure that the city is neither small nor seemingly great, but sufficient and one." Book 4, pg. 90, line 423c As for marketplace squabbles, they will not be worth the while of the citizens, all of whom have had remarkable educations and upbringings, and who will find these things trivial. After stating that the only things left to build are the temples, sacrifices, and other sacred services for the gods, which they do not understand, and about which they will not listen to anyone but the Delphic god, Socrates claims the city has been built.

Now the men attempt to distinguish the justice in the city from the injustice. The first thing they come across is wisdom, but they recognize that it comes from good judgment, which is clearly a kind of knowledge. Thus, men make good judgments because of knowledge rather than ignorance.

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 2

However, this knowledge needs to be whole, rather than just for one skill, and so it is established that it belongs with the smallest group of people: the guardians. Next, they try to find where the city's courage comes from. Defining courage as the "power to preserve under all circumstances the right, lawful opinion of what is and is not to be feared" Book 4, pg. 97, line 430, they find that the people in the city who exhibit this behavior are the guardians.

Moving on to temperance, they define it as a kind of control over certain desires and pleasures. Thus, a 'temperate' man is a master of himself. This means that a man's good part rules over the bad part of his soul. Similarly, in the city, the better rules over



the worse, and thus the city must be 'temperate' and 'mistress of herself'. Next, they assume that it is the women, children, slaves, and 'free men' who make the lesser part of the city, whereas those people who are guided by reason, along with intelligence and right opinion are the better few. Thus, "the desires of the worthless many are controlled by the desires and knowledge of the decent few" Book 4, pg. 98, line 431d, and because this is temperate city the many recognize the few as better. With this in mind, it can be assumed that everybody in this city will have the same opinion of who should rule. This results in temperance existing among all people; thus temperance resembles harmony, since there is agreement in all parts.

The last excellence in the city, therefore, must be justice, and Socrates and his companions come to find that this is simply tending to your own business. This is because this, in turn, will lead to wisdom, temperance, and courage.

Topic Tracking: Excellence 4

Furthermore, since it was decided that each man is only truly good at one thing, if a person tries to meddle in affairs that are not his own, he will be doing something without any skill, and this will lead to weakness in the city, and eventually the city's death. Doing something that can harm the city is doing something wrong, and therefore injustice. By turning this around, it can be found that justice would be minding your own business. However, to examine justice on the individual level, it must first be found whether the soul has the same three levels as the city. Since the attributes of a city must arise from its people, it can safely be assumed that individuals do have these same levels.

Topic Tracking: Justice 11

However, Socrates insists that they further examine the soul to see whether it acts as a whole or whether there is a part for learning, a part for feeling emotions, and a part for desiring pleasure, nourishment and the like. They examine this with the idea that the same thing cannot do opposite things at the same time. However, they recall stories of people who are thirsty but refuse to drink, and who pass by some corpses at which they want to look, but refuse to look. Socrates then summarizes by saying that "a person's desires force him to something to reason, and he berates himself and gets indignant with the part that forces him, and his spirit allies with reason as though reason and desire were at civil war." Book 4, pg. 107, line 440 However, they also show that the spirited part of the soul often is in harmony with the part exhibiting reason. Thus, there appear to be three parts to the soul (since they are not always in harmony): the rational part, the part of desire, and the spirit.

Just like the city, it is only fitting for the rational part to rule, because it is wise and has forethought for the whole soul. Accordingly, the spirited part will obey and be its ally. With this in mind, and with the education and physical training that a person will experience throughout their life, it can only be assumed that the rational and spirited parts will learn to control the desiring part, and ensure that the body minds its own business and thus remains just.



From here, it can be seen that people are brave when the "spirited part preserves through both pleasures and pains the commands of reason about what is and is not to be feared." Book 4, pg. 110, line 442c Also, people are wise because of that part in them which rules for the advantage of itself and the other three parts. People are temperate because of the love and harmony between these three. Thus, it can be established that "justice, although it resembles a mirage, is really concerned with internal rather than external activity - with the true self and its business." Book 4, pg. 111, line 443c Accordingly, a just person will first ensure that he is just, and that all his internal affairs are in accordance with justice, prior to engaging in external affairs.

Topic Tracking: Justice 12

To elaborate, Socrates and his companions state that justice is "establishing the parts of the soul so that they dominate and are dominated by each other according to nature, injustice so that they rule and are ruled contrary to nature." Book 4, pg. 112, line 444d

Topic Tracking: Justice 13

Therefore, excellence must be the health and well being of the soul. Socrates continues, stating that it seems to him that excelle



Book 5

Thus, Socrates concludes, the city described must be good, and all others evil with respect to both the administration of the city and the organization and character of the human soul. This perversion takes place in four forms. As he is about to list them, Polemarchus and Adeimantus interrupt. They say that Socrates is trying to fool them by not speaking of childrearing and mating. They think this because Socrates said that everything is shared in the city, yet they would not agree with sharing wives, and demand that Socrates speak about this matter further. Socrates is reluctant. He had thought that he was done with investigating the city, and he does not want to return to that part of the discussion. However, he is encouraged to do so and does, starting with the fact that the people with the nature and education that have been described for the city have only one right way of possessing and treating their women and children. He begins by describing the lifestyles of female guard dogs, and stating that they are expected to hunt and guard, just like the males. However, they must have had the same upbringing. Thus, women must be raised and educated just like men. Even though this may seem ridiculous according to current culture, it is the logical approach. It must be kept in mind that the city was founded on the concept that each person excels at one thing, and that "each person must tend to the business that accords with his nature." Book 5, pg. 117, line 453b However, a woman's nature is different from a man's, so it must be shown that they can perform similar tasks. Thus, it must be discovered in what ways women's natures are different from men's and in what ways they are similar, so that they may perform the same tasks.

Socrates begins by stating that natural ability is simply the ability to learn something quickly. He then shows that it is apparent that each of the sexes is better than the other at certain things. For example, women are better than men at weaving and cooking. Thus, "the various talents are scattered throughout both sexes, and by nature women take part in all pursuits, as do men, except that in all of them the woman is weaker." Book 5, pg. 120, line 455c With this in mind, it must also be established that some women have different natures than others, resulting in the fact that some women can be guardians, living with men, whilst others can't. However, their workload shall be lighter, as they are the weaker sex. Should any man laugh at them, he will be ignorant, as he does not know what he laughs at; it is believed that "the helpful is beautiful; only the harmful is ugly." Book 5, pg. 122, line 457b

Next, Socrates moves on to discuss the law that women and children shall be common, that none shall live privately with another, and that parents and children shall not know each other. He first discusses how this is advantageous to the city and how it shall be implemented, and then if it is possible. He begins this by saying that they must create the most sacred marriages in the city. Defining sacred as 'most beneficial', he goes on to say that in order to find what the most beneficial is, the mating and breeding of other, highly-regarded species must be considered. Thus, he probes Glaucon to describe how his best hunting dogs and fighting birds breed. Glaucon says that the best of them breed with the best. Socrates points out that this is the way every animal does it, and so it must be the best way. Thus, they will develop a prime herd by allowing their best men



to come together with their best women as often as possible, and their worst men to come together with their worst women as seldom as possible. Then, the offspring of the best must be reared. However, this must be kept a secret from all, except the rulers, in order to prevent civil war, and in order to keep the city happy. To do this, there must be certain festivals where the brides and grooms are brought, and where there will be sacrifices and hymns composed by the poets of the city. However, the lottery must be fixed so that the worthless people will blame their luck, and not the rulers, every time they are not chosen. The men who prove good in warfare and other skills will also have unlimited access to the beds of women. In this way they may have more children than others.

As for the offspring, those of good parents will be looked after by nurses in an area of the city, whereas those of inferior parents, or any who are deformed, will be hidden away. As for nursing, mothers will be brought to the pen where they will nurse babies, not knowing which is theirs. All other duties will be left to the nurses.

It is then decided that a woman's prime is from age twenty to age forty, while a man's is from his 'sharpest running peak' until age fifty-five. With this in mind, anybody not in their peak is not allowed to have children. They will be punished if they do so, as will anybody who tampers with eligible women without being paired by the ruler. Children of these unions will be unauthorized and considered bastards. After their prime, men may couple with anyone they wish, except women related to them. However, any children conceived in this time will not be reared by the state and will be the responsibility of the father. Any man should recognize the position of father with any child born between seven and ten months after he shared a bed with the woman. Any children of the same man will call each other brother and sister, and cannot sleep together unless the oracle at Delphi consents. Thus, Socrates finishes with this part of the argument.

He now moves on to confirm that this is the best method for the regime the city is following. It is first established that there is no greater evil than something that tears the city apart, and makes many out of it, instead of one. Also, the best-governed city is one where everybody shares everybody else's pleasure and pain, and works like a partnership. In this way, if one person is hurt, everybody suffers. Now, the city is examined to see if it works like this. The first thing that is discussed is what the rulers and citizens will call each other. Here, it is established that the citizens will call the rulers "preservers" and "allies," and the rulers will call the citizens "wage-payers" and "providers." Rulers will call other rulers "fellow guardians." Furthermore, they all regard each other as family. However, these are not only names of belonging, as people must act according to their names. Thus, everybody feels they belong in the city, and everybody has the same things in common, and thus they call the same things "mine." This will make them partners in pleasures and pains. This is caused by the fact that the guardians have wives and children in common, as discussed. Thus, it can be seen that the possession of common wives and children leads to unity in the city and is essentially the cause of the greatest good for the city.

Furthermore, the elders will be directed to rule and punish the young, and the young are never to disrespect the elders. There are two strong guardians to protect against this:



fear and shame. "Shame forbids molesting a parent, and fear warns that the others will rush to the victim's defense as his sons, brothers and fathers." Book 5, pg. 130, line 465b Thus, all these laws will ensure that the people live in peace with each, and will prevent them from the little evils the materialistic life attracts them to, such as borrowing. In this case, the guardians will be happy since they are ruling a wonderful city.

Now, it is necessary to see whether it is possible for people to have the kinds of partnerships discussed. The philosophers begin by discussing war, saying that, just as with any skill, children must watch and learn before they practice it. Thus, the children must help in the preparations for war. Also, just like any other animal, the guardians will fight harder if their children are around. However, in order to protect them, the fathers will select which wars they are to watch and keep them from the very dangerous ones. Also, in case the war does not turn out well, the children must be well equipped to flee, and thus horses must be ready for them. The children shall also witness that cowardice will have a person sent to become a craftsman or a farmer, and that courage and the best fighter will be rewarded greatly. When a good fighter dies, he shall be acclaimed a hero and shall be buried as a spiritual, divine man should be.

When fighting other Greeks, the captured people must not be enslaved, and it must be preached that it is wrong to enslave people of your own kind, that only barbarians may be enslaved. Also, the practice of stripping the dead, and preventing their people from collecting and burying them must be stopped. Another thing that must be stopped is burning their villages - the only thing allowed to be taken is the crop. As for civil war, nobody must be killed when attacking the other side except the few people who started the dispute. Also, nothing must be destroyed or burned.

Glaucon now insists that Socrates describe how such a city should be governed. Socrates says that he will do this by examining the rulers of the current day and seeing what they are doing wrong. His first suggestion, which makes his audience angry, is that nobody will be happy "until either philosophers become kings or those now kings and regents become genuine philosophers." Book 5, pg. 138, line 473c Socrates begins defending his argument by clarifying what makes a philosopher. The first thing he establishes is that when people love something, they love the whole, and not the part. Next, he says that knowledge and opinion are both (different) powers, where knowledge pertains to what is, and opinion conjectures. Since knowledge is what *is* and opinion cannot be what *is not*, but also cannot be what *is*, it must be in between. Through this, it can be seen that lovers of beautiful things, without seeing the beauty itself, are lovers of opinion; whereas those who embrace each thing itself that *is* are philosophers.

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 3



Book 6

Socrates now moves on to see whether philosophers or non-philosophers should rule the city. He first states, as a result of his previous argument, that "philosophers are the ones who can reach what always stays the same in every respect, and non-philosophers the ones who cannot, who wonder among the many things that go in every direction." Book 6, pg. 146, line 484 Those who rule the city must be capable of guarding the laws and pursuits of the city, and so Socrates asks his audience who they deem more capable - those who see the truth, or those who only think that they see it. Everybody agrees that those who see the truth, and do not shun any part of it are better than those who don't. Socrates then states that all philosophers must have truthfulness in their nature and must hate lies and never accept any willingly. This is because someone who is passionately in love will love everything to do with what he is in love with; since philosophers are in love with wisdom, and wisdom is very closely related to truth, they must also love truth. Furthermore, they will love the pleasure of the soul, and will not find much to gain in the pleasure of the body. Such people, therefore, will not be greedy, or interested in material goods, but instead, they will be temperate. Also, slavishness is not part of a philosopher. True philosophers will realize that there is more than human life, and that death is nothing to be afraid of, and thus will not exhibit any signs of slavishness. To conclude, when examining whether a soul is philosophic or not, it must be judged from childhood up, in order to see whether it acts justly and gently, or not; and whether he learns easily or not; and is forgetful or not. A person with such characteristics as these should naturally rule the city. The reason no philosophers are rulers is because nobody worth anything asks his subjects to let him rule them, and yet the people cannot tell the difference between the true philosophers and the politicians.

As for the usefulness of philosophers and the claim that they are useless, Socrates says to blame this on the people who don't use them, not on the philosophers. In order to show that philosophy is not the cause of the many scoundrels who claim to be philosophers, Socrates pursues the following argument: since the nature of a philosopher is inherently good, and consists of the positive qualities already discussed, there must be something that corrupts it. With the concept that "evil is more opposed to the good than to the no-good" Book 6, pg. 154, line 491d, it makes sense that in strange surroundings the best nature will end up worse than a poor one. Therefore, the best-natured souls turn out exceptionally badly if they get bad schooling, and "great crimes and pure evil come only from vigorous natures perverted by upbringing; a weak nature never does anything great, good or evil." Book 6, pg. 154, line 491e

Now Socrates turns to examine the sophists, whom he says do not preach wisdom, but rather their opinions. He gives an example, saying that when a young man, who is well-born and handsome and rich, has learned all he can from all his teachers, all those around him will want to use him for their benefit. Should he be born with the characteristics of a philosopher, and realize, when he is powerful, that he lacks knowledge, and wish to pursue it, those around him will say anything to stop him for they fear that they will lose their benefits should he leave his current position. Thus, the rulers that do want to become philosophers fall away from philosophy, and lead a false



life. Similarly, he says, people who are not suited to study philosophy but do are considered sophists, as they are unsuited to the education, and unworthy of philosophy, which is considered one of the greatest pursuits. Thus, only a few people worthy of philosophy, and uncorrupted by society, remain. These are the true philosophers, to whom people should listen, and who should be kings. However, none of the current regimes are suited to this kind of person, except the city in this discussion.

Now the fact that all great things are precarious comes into play. The next issue discussed is how the city can handle philosophy without destroying itself. Socrates claims that philosophy must be practiced in exactly the reverse of the way it is practiced now. This is because now people practice the hardest part of philosophy - discussion - without any proper education in it, while they are young and without experience. Thus, they are made out to be idiots, and are reluctant to listen to others practice it and learn from them. Instead, people should:

"[E]ngage in adolescent philosophy and education as boys and young men, and give special attention to their bodies as they grow up, to acquire a helper for philosophy. As the soul begins to mature with the passing years, tighten up its exercise, and when their strength declines and exempts them from military and political duties, then be turned out to pasture to do nothing - except as a sideline - but practice philosophy, if they're to live happily here and crown their lives when they die with their fitting portion over there."
Book 6, pg. 160, line 498b

However, it is unlikely that any ruler will suddenly become a philosopher, or that any philosopher will rise to position of ruler. Furthermore, he decides that the reason philosophy is looked unfavorably upon is because of the young people who claim to practice it but actually spend their time abusing and quarreling with each other. On the other hand, a true philosopher, interested in things that remain constant and rational, will start to imitate such things, as people who admire things often do. Thus, through this imitation, and through associating with the divine and orderly, the person becomes as orderly and rational a human being as possible. This, in turn, should convince those who are not already convinced that philosophers should be rulers, as they know how to handle situations in a calm and rational manner. Continuing, Socrates states that it would not be unlikely for these people to produce offspring similar to themselves, with philosophic natures. However, should they not produce offspring of this sort, it should not be too difficult for the city to find someone who does possess the qualities listed for a ruler.

With this decided, they move on to discuss what studies and pursuits rulers should have, and at what ages they should take each up. Socrates then goes on to say that knowledge is greater than justice. However, it is knowledge of the good that is great.

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 4

He then goes on to say that the 'good' is a very ambiguous term and can be interpreted many ways.



Topic Tracking: The Good 1

He attempts to define it himself, since his audience persists. He uses the analogy of seeing and sunlight in the following manner: even though things are visible, they cannot be seen unless there is sunlight; also, if there is moonlight, our eyes will adjust to allow for the difference. He then tells his audience to think of the situation as the same with the eye of the soul. "When it rests on the place lit by truth and what *is*, it perceives it and knows it and seems to have intelligence. But in the place mingled with darkness, the region of becoming and passing away it darkens and conjectures, changes its opinions up and down and now appears to have no intelligence." Book 6, pg.170, line 508d As a result, he concludes that just as light and seeing should not be regarded as the sun, but as sun-like; knowledge and truth should not be regarded as good, but as good-like.

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 5

Also, higher honors must be reserved for the state of the good.

Topic Tracking: The Good 2

Furthermore, the good is not only in knowable things, but also in existence and being; thus, the good is beyond being.

Topic Tracking: The Good 3

To prove this, Socrates asks his audience to assume that they have two classes: the visible and the intelligible. Then, he asks them to take a line divided into two unequal segments - one for the visible, and one for the intelligible class - and divide each segment again in the same ratio. In the first segment, there is the visible class of images (shadows etc.). In the second segment there are the things, such as animals around us, and natural and manmade things. The intelligible segment is divided into two parts: one that the soul is obliged to investigate from assumptions in order to reach a logical conclusion that they were looking for from the start. Since it is usually easier to illustrate concepts to help their understanding, geometrical shapes are often used, and thus this is a class in itself. The last class is that of mathematical objects, and is the class of understanding.

Now he relates these four classes to the four states of the soul, giving intellection to the highest segment, understanding to the second, trust to the third, and imagination to the last. Then, he instructs his audience to arrange them in the same proportions, regarding each as participating in as much clarity as its object does truth.



Book 7

Socrates now attempts to describe human nature in both of its states: the educated and the uneducated. He asks his audience to imagine a cave with prisoners in it. The cave has a long entrance and there is a fire burning above which gives them light. The prisoners have been chained since childhood, and can only look from side to side. Between the fire and the prisoners, higher than the prisoners, there is a road with a low wall built alongside it, similar to the screen set in front of puppeteers. People, and animals, often walk along the road, sometimes talking and other times silent.

Having described his cave, Socrates asks his audience whether the prisoners would ever see anything of themselves or their prisoners except for the shadows on the wall. Everybody agrees that the only thing the prisoners would see is the shadows of themselves, the prisoners, and the passers-by. Furthermore, if they spoke to each other, they would believe that what they saw was reality, as would be the case when the passers-by spoke if there was an echo. Thus, "men like that would firmly believe truth to be the shadows of the artificial objects." Book 7, pg. 176, line 515c If one of the prisoners were to be allowed to look up and saw the fire and light, at first he would be blinded. However, afterwards, when the things passing by are pointed out to him, he would probably be baffled and believe that the shadows are truer than the reality. Then, he would return to the cave and to the things he believed were in reality clearer than the ones pointed out. If somebody then forced him outside again, he would probably be blinded, in pain, and outraged and unable to see the truth. However, eventually he would adjust - probably first to the moonlight and starlight, but then to sunlight. He would also look at shadows first, and then associate them with the objects that they belong to. Finally, he will be able to see himself and contemplate what he is like.

After coming to these realizations, the prisoner will think back to his cave-life and his old "wisdom," and pity his fellow prisoners. Also, if he went back down to the cave, darkness would fill his eyes, and he would not be able to make out the shadows as he used to. Thus his fellow prisoners would believe that his eyes were ruined, and they would want to kill the person who was trying to make them go up into the sunlight. Now, Socrates says to apply this to everything that has been said, and regard "the upward journey and the viewing of the upward world as the soul's ascent to the intelligible." Book 7, pg. 177, line 517b Socrates takes his point further now, and says that the shape of the good is finally, and with difficulty, seen in the intelligible realm (as previously discussed). When it is seen, it must be recognized for what it is, and thus the gods will be recognized and people, especially this man, will feel that it is his obligation to act rationally for himself and his community. However, not all people will want to tend to human concerns, as they may keep their new education to themselves.

Topic Tracking: The Good 4

As shown by the parable of the man from the cave, the source of confusion was moving from darkness to light and then from light to darkness. The same happens to the soul, and so people must not laugh at others when they see them stunned and confused by



things in life, but instead try to reason whether they are stunned because they are coming from the darkness to the light, or dazed because they are darkened by unfamiliarity and are leaving the light. This shows that the power of learning is in everyone's soul, and that the eye cannot be turned from brightness to darkness without turning the whole body until it faces being and can recognize and contemplate what *is*. Therefore, education would be the art of turning the soul around in the easiest, most effective way, so that it looks where it should be looking. With this in mind, Socrates claims that the excellence of understanding comes from something divine, whereas the other excellences are probably close to the body.

Topic Tracking: Excellence 6

From this, it is clear that uneducated people with no experience of truth, and people who have not finished their education, should never rule. This is because the uneducated have no single target in life at which to aim their activity, while the others won't willingly work or act at all. Thus, the aim of the new city will be to educate those with the best natures to the highest level possible, but then make them climb back down and share their knowledge with the rest, as this is for the good of the city. In this manner, the philosophers will be forced to care for others as guardians, and the city will be governed better because the guardians, living in a cave, know the reality. Then Socrates claims a truth: "A city whose future rulers are the least eager to rule will necessarily be the best governed and freest from strife, and the one with opposite rulers the worst." Book 7, pg. 181, line 520d

Next, the men ponder which type of education has the power to turn the soul around. The first thing that occurs to Socrates is that they already mentioned that while young, the guardians must be athletes of war; thus, the education they are looking for must be also useful for warriors. Besides poetry and physical education, they find that mathematics will be necessary, since everything always occurs in numbers, even war, and since mathematics would lead the soul to contemplation of what *is*, as it can be puzzling and leads people to think. Next, they move on to examine whether geometry would be beneficial to the soul or not. They first establish that it is the knowledge of what always *is*, not what is becoming or passing away. Therefore, it should be taught to the guardians. The third subject they discuss is astronomy. They deem this necessary because it makes people contemplate the third dimension, whereas geometry deals only in planes. Also, astronomy suits farming, sailing, and soldiering. The part of astronomy that they should learn is the speed and slowness that *is* as the stars move in relation to each other. In order to make the soul useful, astronomy should be pursued like geometry - by means of problems. Also, harmonics must be studied, as must dialectics. Dialectics is incredibly important, because it means that people can express themselves, and it is also the only study that does not use assumptions that people cannot explain. Therefore, dialectics is the only study that opens the eye of the soul, yet it needs the other studies to help it turn the soul around. Also, dialecticians are able to grasp and explain the essence of things, and are able to define the good.

Topic Tracking: The Good 5



Now they return to discuss the type of people to be taught these things. Primarily, they must be willing to learn, and must be good at it. Also, force must not be used, because enforced learning does not stay with the soul. During this time, students must be closely watched to see who has a natural affinity for what. Those who consistently prove to be the best at everything must be put on a list at age twenty-one. After this, they will receive honors, and all their studies will be unified into a comprehensive view of their relation to one another and to the nature of what *is*. Also, this is a good test for the dialectic nature, as a comprehensive person is dialectic, while others are not. At age thirty, the selected few must be reexamined and tested to see who can let go of their eyes and the rest of their senses thereby approaching being itself and the truth. Those who can must be brought to an even greater honor. However, dialectics must not be taught while people are young, since children will only use it as a source of contradiction, and when they have been refuted many times, they quickly start doubting themselves and all their former beliefs. This, in turn, will defeat the purpose of dialectics, which is to have people of stable, orderly natures. However, since dialectics is very necessary, they must engage in it for twice as long as they engaged in physical education, thus resulting in training in dialectics for about five years. Then, they must rule in the military offices of the young, so that they do not lag behind in experience; and they must be tested for strength. After about fifteen years of ruling in these military offices, when they are about fifty, the best of these people must be taken to see the light itself, and must spend the rest of their lives taking turns at ruling the city, the individuals, and themselves, though spending much of their time with philosophy. When their turn comes to rule, however, they must do it because it is necessary, and not because it is beautiful, and keeping in mind that they must constantly educate those younger than them so that they may rule one day.

Socrates adds that this could all be possible if the current ruler sends everyone in the city older than ten out to the farms and takes over the children, raising them as discussed.



Book 8

After summarizing their decisions and the description of the city, Socrates returns to his statement that the method used in the governing of this city is good, while there are four others worth discussing that are not good. The four regimes Socrates now names are the Cretan or Spartan regime, oligarchy, democracy, and tyranny. It makes sense that these are the only types of regimes, since human character must have the same number of forms as the regime. Now, Socrates attempts to identify a type of man with each regime so that the philosophers can compare and contrast the just to the unjust and see who is happier.

The first one they discuss is aristocracy. They say that the best man resembles this, and that he is the just man. They then try to determine how a timocracy, rule by honor, might arise from an aristocracy, and come to the conclusion that the aristocracy may decay and deteriorate because of human nature; that is, people having children when they should not, and the mixing of the many metals and such, may lead to inequality, and may lead to people who should not be ruling being in power; this will bring about hatred and war. As a result of all the mixtures, two groups of guardians started pulling apart: those polluted with iron and bronze and concerned with making money, and those of silver and gold, rich in their natures, trying to bring back the ancient arrangements. After much violence, they then compromised and distributed houses and land as private possessions, and enslaved the friends and providers as serfs, giving themselves over to warfare. This would result in a regime somewhere between an oligarchy and an aristocracy. It will be ruled by honor, however, and will thus be a timarchy. It will imitate aristocracy by honoring its rulers, as well as in other ways.

However, this will lead men to desire more and more possessions, as in an oligarchy. They will also honor gold and silver, and have their own treasuries, and despise spending money because they honor it and do not possess it openly. The most important thing, however, will be love of honor and victory. Thus, a timocracy has come about. The man corresponding to this would also have love of victory, and would be self-willed and unmusical. He would also be fond of listening, but not a speaker. He would be harsh towards slaves and gentle towards free men, subservient to rulers, and fond of rule and honor. He would expect to rule from war and victory, and will love gymnastics and hunting. He would despise money when he is young, but grow to love it more and more as he grows older and no longer devotes himself to excellence. This will happen as the best guardian, the power of reasoned, educated speech, leaves him.

Topic Tracking: Excellence 7

Timocratic men become so because, as boys, they hear their mothers complaining that their husbands are not rulers and are not interested in money and the like. This makes the mother resentful and makes her speak to her son of her husband as an unmanly man. The servants also have a part in this, as they tell the boy that his father does not punish people who owe him money and the like, and that his father is weak. Thus, the boy will want to be strong and more of a man than his father. Then, when he goes out



into the city, he will hear more of this, and will hear that men who tend their own business are foolish and held in low-esteem, while busybodies are honored and admired. On the other hand, the young man will see his father's actions and hear his words. As a result, he will be torn between the rational part his father instilled in him and the desiring and spirited parts that are naturally in him. However, since he does not have an evil nature, but simply keeps bad company, he will come out a compromise: "he turned the rule of his soul over to its victory-loving, middle, spirited part and became a high-minded lover of honor." Book 8, pg. 208, line 550b

Next, they move on to study oligarchy and the oligarchic man. This regime is based on property assessment, where the rich rule and the poor have no part in government. The oligarchy comes about as the timocracy is destroyed. This happens because of the treasuries of gold that the individuals in the timocracy have. As people spend their money on possessions, they watch and compete with each other, and eventually the majority of people follow them. Because they all want more and more possessions, they start wanting more money, and thus honor money more and excellence less. Accordingly, the wealthy become more honored, and the people of excellence less honored. With the majority now money-loving businessmen instead of lovers of victory and honor, the admired rich men will be put into office, and the poor will be dishonored.

Topic Tracking: Excellence 8

Then, a law is established assigning a monetary amount as the limit of an oligarchic regime, thus disbaring anyone whose property falls below the assigned value. This law is enforced through violence and terror, and it completes the formation of the oligarchy.

The faults of this city are that the citizens assess people based on the value of their property and not on their skills. Also, in reality there are two cities in the oligarchy - one for the rich and one for the poor; they are always plotting against each other, thus creating a weak city. This means that they can't fight a war: they will be scared to arm the majority since it may turn against them, and they are too few to fight a war by themselves. One of the greatest evils of the city is that they do not prohibit people from selling all their belongings and property. This means people will not belong to any of the classes or professions, but will simply be poor and helpless paupers. Also, when these people are rulers, they are not really looking to benefit the city but themselves. This means that they are not truly rulers, but rather squanderers. The beggars in the city also indicate that there are thieves, pickpockets, robbers and the like lurking around. In the oligarchic cities there are lots of beggars, which means that crime is extremely high in these cities. As a result, the rulers have to deliberately attempt to restrain crime by using force. However, the reasons that these people exist are simply non-education, bad upbringing, and the regime.

As for the oligarchic man, he would probably follow on from the timocratic man in the following manner: growing up, he will see his father work hard for all that he has. However, after his father has accomplished much, he will probably be brought to court under some false accusations and be executed or disfranchised or something of the sort, left with no property. After the son has suffered all this and lost his possessions, he



will be terrified, and will make his honor-loving spirit the most important of all. Because of his poverty, he will also make the accumulation of wealth the most important thing in his life. He will also enslave his rational and spirited part, allowing the rational part to calculate and examine nothing but how to make more money, and the spirited part to admire and honor nothing but wealth and the wealthy, and to love no honor but that connected with the possession of wealth.

Using this as a basis, the oligarchic man resembles the oligarchy in many ways, such as prizing money above everything else, gratifying only his desires and refusing to make expenditures for anything else. He will not have thought much about education, or else he would not have appointed such leaders. Because of his lack of education, evil desires are in him, and he restrains them only by force because of his concerns for other things. However, if given the chance to commit injustice without being caught, he will.

Next on the list is democracy. Democracy stems from oligarchy because people want to get as rich as possible. The manner in which it happens is as follows: the rulers are reluctant to prohibit self-indulgent men from squandering and losing their property, and so they buy it up or lend them money against it, thus increasing their wealth and honor even more. This proves that a city can't honor wealth and still have enough temperance in her citizens. Thus, an oligarchy neglects temperance and encourages self-indulgence. Because of this, it sometimes forces uncommon men into poverty, and fills them with hate, leading them to fall in love with revolution. On the other hand, the moneymakers convince any person with any excellence left inside of him to become a money-lover by giving him money. In order to prevent this, a law is passed that most voluntary contracts be made at the contractor's own risk.

Topic Tracking: Excellence 9

As for families, children are spoiled and unfit for any labor, too soft to hold up to any pain, while the parents neglect everything but making money and do not care about excellence at all. Eventually, the poor will conquer, kill off their enemies and exile the rest. Then, they will give everyone an equal share in their government and in offices; thus constituting a democracy.

The people living in a democracy are free, and each citizen can arrange his life privately. Because of this, there will be many different people, and anything is allowed. There is also lack of compulsion, so that even if a person is competent, they don't have to rule, or be ruled, or go to war, or anything of the like. Furthermore, people do not care what route others have taken to get where they are, especially politicians, as long as others like them. As for the democratic man, the two natures of desires must be established before attempting to describe him: there are necessary desires, ones that benefit us if they are satisfied; and unnecessary desires, those that we can get rid of if we discipline ourselves.

The democratic man comes from the oligarchic in the following manner: the young man will be raised in a stingy, uneducated way. He may occasionally taste some



unnecessary desires. If his father or some other relations attempt to admonish and berate him in order to make him more oligarchic, strife and counter-strife will occur within him, causing a civil war. Some desires will be wiped out, but the final result is that he will come to order. However, because of his father's ignorance of childrearing, the exiled desires will come back even stronger, seizing the young man's soul, replacing the old thoughts with new opinions, denouncing shame as foolishness, defining temperance as cowardice, and persuading him that moderation and reasonable spending are slavish peasant virtues which also need to be exiled from his soul. Instead of all these, they put in insolence, anarchy, extravagance, and shamelessness. In this way, a young man raised among necessary desires changes into one who enjoys and practices useless and unnecessary pleasures. Therefore, he lives each day at a time, gratifying whatever desires turn up. He may also occasionally get involved in politics or the military, if he likes, and he says and does whatever he pleases.

Now they begin speaking about how democracy leads to tyranny: the insatiable good that democracy defines as freedom. However, should the city fall into misfortune, the people will blame the rulers and call them oligarchs. Should anyone then obey the rulers, they will be denounced as voluntary slaves; they honor rulers who act like subjects and subjects who act like rulers. This extends to homes, so that parents must act like children and children like parents. Similarly, teachers are terrified of pupils, and children fight with adults about everything. There is also complete freedom and equal rights between the sexes, and slaves are as free as their owners. This makes the citizen's soul too sensitive to endure any slavery, and eventually they will disregard the laws, as they must have no master over them. In democracy, there are three classes: the drones, who speak and transact, the rich, from whom the drones can get money, and the people, the peaceful, self-employed, workers and farmers who form the largest class. The revolution starts because the majority sees what the rich have and believe that they are oligarchs. The drones incite this even further, and there is a main advocate for the people. Inevitably, the advocate becomes the tyrant and fights in a civil war against the property-holders. When they get this far, they are often scared that the rich will try to kill them, and so ask for bodyguards to defend the "defender of democracy." The people provide this because they trust the tyrant.

In the beginning, when a tyrant walks around he will greet everyone, deny being a tyrant, and make promises to individuals and the state. He will also cancel debts, distribute land to the people, and pretend to be kind and gracious to everyone. However, after exiling his enemies, and befriending the others, there will be no need for him as a leader, and therefore he will keep starting new wars so that the people keep thinking that they need him. He will also need to raise war taxes and the like, and people will begin to hate him, even the people who put him there in the first place will start to speak against him. Therefore, if he wants to survive as a tyrant, he must eliminate everything until he is left without a single friend or enemy, and he must always beware of everyone around him. Ultimately, he is either to live with worthless people, or die.



Book 9

Before the companions start examining the tyrannical man, they try to sort out the desires. They come up with a class of wild, terrible, lawless desires which reveal themselves in our sleep. Then they say that the wild, lawlessness of the democratic man needs an advocate, Love, and a bodyguard. Madness is the bodyguard which defends love. Madness goes berserk, killing desires and opinions that it should be good or capable of shame. It does this until it has purged itself of temperance and filled the soul with imported madness, and thus the origin of the tyrannical man.

Similarly, when a man is drunk, he may get these ideas. This man will have many parties, feasts, and the like, which will eventually lead to loans and reduction of property. When all that runs out, the desires are restless because they want the fun to continue. Particularly restless is Love, the captain of the body, who will make the man examine who has what, and who will lead him to steal by deceit or force. This will eventually lead to him stealing from his parents, and when those possessions run out he will probably steal from people at night. Thus, Love lives in him tyrannically, in total lawlessness, resorting to violence when necessary. Men like this associate only with flatterers, and are friends to nobody. They can be called faithless and unjust.

In order to compare the happiness and excellence of each man to the other, Socrates finds that it may be easier to compare the cities that they represent to each other. The two that the group of philosophers now compare are the tyranny and the kingship (first described). They say that one is the ultimate of wretchedness, and the other is the ultimate of happiness. In the tyranny, although there are masters and slaves, the political structure can be distinguished from a regime of slavery. Similarly, in the soul of a tyrannical man, the majority of the parts in his soul are slaves to a small, demented one. Because of this, the tyrannized soul will least of all do what it wants, and be impoverished, just as the city will. Also, just as the city is beset with fears and is weeping and wailing with grief, the tyrannical man will be filled with grief and maddened by desires and lust. Just as this city is the most wretched city, the most wretched man is the ruler of the city: not only can he not control his own desires, he also cannot control those of the tyrannical people in the city.

They conclude that the happiest man is the kingly man, the next the timocratic, followed by the oligarchic, the democratic, and the tyrannical. Thus, the most just is the happiest, and the least just the least happy, "whether or not they're seen for what they are by all gods and men" Book 9, pg. 238, line 580c.

Socrates goes on to prove this another way. He says that they had already come to the conclusion that there are three parts to the soul: the part with which people learn, the spirit, and another part that they called the "desiring part," for lack of a better term. They assume that it loves and gets its pleasure from profit, and thus call it the money-making part, which is why they divide men into three classes, wisdom, victory, and profit, as different parts of the soul rule different people. If asked, each person will say that his or her class is the best, and will commend it. However, the philosophers must discuss



which of these classes lives best. The best criteria by which to judge this are experience, knowledge, and arguing. However, it is only the philosopher who will learn the nature of the absolute truth and what *is*, and therefore he is the only one who can speak truthfully about whether his life is the best or not. Since he says that it is, it must be. Furthermore, it is only the philosopher who combines knowledge with experience, and judgment by argument is a tool of wisdom, and thus only the philosopher will be able to practice this. Since experience, knowledge and argument are what determine the best life, and the philosopher practices all three, his life must be the best.

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 6

The second-best life would be the life of the honor-loving, and the third that of the profit-making. Thus, the just man defeats the unjust man again.

Socrates pursues this further, wanting to prove it a third time. The men start with the fact that pain is the opposite of pleasure, but that there is a state in between the two that is neither. Sick people, for example, say that there is nothing better than being healthy, but don't notice "health" until they are sick. Health is not a state on its own; it is truly the absence of sickness that people want, and it is thus that they describe health: peace. Peace, the philosophers conclude, must be what is between pleasure and pain. Socrates likens this to the three levels of nature: the upper, middle and lower. The middle is upper to the lower, but lower to the middle, however, a person would not know this unless he had experienced all three, as a person going from lower to middle with no experience of upper would think that he was in upper.

Now Socrates states that ignorance and lack of knowledge are an empty state of the soul, whereas nourishment and intelligence fill the soul.

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 7

Thus, the more filled a person is, the better. Then he asks his audience "which more fully *is*: something that partakes of the laws alike, immortal and true, is that way itself, and appears in things like that, or something that partakes of and appear in the never alike and mortal, and is that way itself?" Book 9, pg. 243, line 585c They answer that the first one is the superior one. Accordingly, people who are filled with what *is* experience a truer joy than those who are not filled with what *is*. Therefore, people with lack of knowledge and experience, who spend their lives feasting and wandering between the lower and the middle, never contemplate that there might be an upper. They spend their lives unhappy because they are trying to full themselves with an unreal thing that *is not*. They are thus condemned to pleasures mixed with pains. However, if reason and knowledge were used in the pursuit of desires, true pleasures would be attained. This would be so because the pleasure-seekers would be following the truth and their own proper pleasures. From this it can be concluded that when the whole soul follows the wisdom-loving part, all its parts will be just, tending to their own business and enjoying their own pleasures. Should another part dominate the soul, true pleasure will never be found.



Since what is farthest from reason is also what is farthest from law and order, the tyrannical desires are the farthest from reason. Thus, the tyrant will be the farthest from true pleasure. Socrates now goes on to mathematically find out how far away he will be. To do this, he says that the tyrant is thrice removed from the king, as is the oligarch; thus, they must be three times removed from true pleasure. "The 'phantom' of a tyrant's pleasure must then be a plane number measured on its length - Which raised to its second and then to its third power, will clearly give the distance." Book 9, pg. 246, line 587d Using this formula, the king's life is seven hundred and twenty nine times more pleasant than the tyrant's. Accordingly, the just man must beat the unjust man even more staggeringly with respect to grace, beauty, and excellence in life.

Now the men return to the claim that it pays to be unjust if people think that you are just. Socrates describes a soul consisting of a wild beast, a lion, and a man. When a person says that it pays to be unjust, this means that he is saying it profits him to feed his beast and lion, and to starve and enfeeble the man, so that he gets dragged around wherever the animals take him. A person who says that justice pays is saying that he should practice and say whatever will make the man the master of his soul, so the man will care for the animals and prevent them from growing wild. Therefore, the man who praises justice must be telling the truth, whereas he who commends injustice knows nothing of what he disparages. However, he does not know that he is making a mistake. Through this analogy the conversants determine that beautiful things are ones that make others subservient to humans, whereas ugly ones are those that enslave the tame to the wild. This can be shown by the following example: it doesn't pay for a man to sell his son or daughter into slavery, even if he receives a fortune for it, because it means he has no pity on himself and will enslave the most godlike things to the most godless. He must be even more horrible than a wretch who can be bribed for gold anytime. To prevent people from becoming like this, laws must be enforced, and children must be ruled until they have a strong structure instilled in them.

With all this in mind, one cannot say that the unjust man is happier than the just, or that doing something shameful to get more money is good. Furthermore, it cannot pay to commit injustice, even if one is not caught. If a person who committed injustice were caught, it would be a good thing: his wild side would start to be tamed, and his soul might recover its best nature. Accordingly, a sensible man will spend his life directing his efforts to this end. He will pursue studies that will help him make his soul good. Also, he will not allow his body to be persuaded into animal pleasures, and he will not pursue gold and wealth unnecessarily, but will attempt to not be disturbed by either an abundance or lack of possessions. He will also freely partake of anything that improves him, but shun all honors, public or private. He will also be unwilling to take part in politics, unless it is in the city described.



Book 10

Having sorted out the classes in the soul, Socrates now states that imitation must not be allowed in the city. He begins to prove this by saying that normally, a person would give a unique form to each group of things. For example, he says, beds, because they all look similar, are all known as beds. Now he asks his audience to imagine a craftsman who could make everything in heaven and earth. Then he says that anybody can do this with a mirror. However, what such a person creates is an appearance; it isn't truly there. This, he concludes, is what a painter does. Similarly, a bed-maker does not make the form of a bed, but rather a particular bed. Therefore, he is not making what is real. He is making something like it. This is not a bed that *is*, and it is faint when compared to the truth. To show what imitation is, Socrates elucidates as follows: there are three beds, one made by a god, one by a carpenter, and one by a painter. Each of these three is in charge of a form of bed. The god, for no apparent reason, only supplies one bed. This *is* the bed itself. Thus, he is called the "naturalizer," because he brought the bed to nature. As for the carpenter, he is called a craftsman. However, the painter cannot be called a craftsman, because he produces the third product away from nature. He must be called the imitator, as all tragedians are. Therefore, all imitators are a third away from the truth. In addition, the painter cannot paint the truth, because the truth can be seen from many different angles, exemplified by the fact that a bed looks different from many different angles. Therefore, he must be painting an apparition. Thus, "imitation lies far from the truth and can make all things because it captures only a tiny bit of each one, and that but a phantom." Book 10, pg. 255, line 598b

According to this, if anybody claims to, or is said to, know everything, they must be deceiving people and be imitators. As poets are often said to know everything, they must be closely examined to see whether they do know what they are talking about, or whether they are imitators. Taking Homer, who spoke much about governing and war, as an example, Socrates finds that he never governed and was never a leader in any war. If he had known as much about these subjects as he claimed to when he spoke about them, he would surely much rather have participated in them, thus leaving behind deeds for which he could be admired, rather than simply speaking about them. Therefore, it can be concluded that he was a poetic imitator who did not really know the truth or understand anything of reality, but only of appearance.

Socrates now continues by saying that there are three skills for each thing: one uses, one makes, and one imitates. The excellence and righteousness for each thing depend solely on the use for which it was created, which naturally means that the user has the most experience of it, and must tell the maker how it works best.

Topic Tracking: Excellence 10

One knows and reports, and the other believes and makes; and thus the maker learns about his object from the user. This means that the imitator will never obtain knowledge of the things he imitates as he neither uses them, nor makes them. Thus, the imitator knows nothing about that which he imitates, and imitation is nothing serious. Further,



since it is three times removed from the truth, and thus farthest from the calculating, rational part of the soul, it contradicts that part of the soul and must not be good. Furthermore, imitators produce trivia compared to the truth, and they attack the weak parts of our souls, as exemplified by poets speaking about emotions. Because of this, all imitators must be barred from the city, as they destroy the rational part of the soul, that which makes people just.

Despite all these charges, the most serious one has not yet been discussed: imitation's appalling ability to deform most decent people. People showing their emotions when listening to poetry, but then hiding them in real life, exemplifies this. This means that it is poetry that makes us weak and makes our emotional side stronger and thus leads to people becoming less just, and. Poetry should definitely be banished from the city.

Next, they move on to discuss whether the soul is immortal and does not perish. They start with the fact that there is a good and an evil, and that good is that which helps and preserves, whereas evil is that which destroys and corrupts. Also, they agree that each thing has a good and an evil, and is destroyed by its natural evil because the good could not possibly destroy anything. However, there may be things in nature in which the evil corrupts but does not destroy. As for the soul, when it is corrupted by its evil it still exists within the body, and it is illogical to say that another vice will destroy it if its own does not. Therefore, the soul can never be destroyed and is immortal. Thus, the same number of souls and the same souls will always exist. However, it would be hard for a living thing to be eternal if it was composed of several parts, so the soul must be one thing and not composed of several parts, as has been discussed all along. Nonetheless, studying it in several parts does help one to understand it. Despite this, to learn the true nature of the soul one must look at it thoroughly, by reason, for only then will a person truly find it beautiful. Thus, philosophy must be used in order to note what the soul wants and what company it seeks, being divine and immortal.

It is now granted that justice is good because of itself, and that it belongs to the soul. Also, it is said that justice does give a good reputation, and that the gods know who is truly just and who is unjust, and they love the just and hate the other. The people whom the gods love will have the best lives, with the best of everything always available to them.

Topic Tracking: Justice 14

If they do suffer, it must be assumed that this suffering will be made up for in the afterlife. Furthermore, the just men will be known as just and marry into families of their choice, and rule the cities when older. However, the unjust will be found out in their youth and will never experience such happiness.

The greatest reward will be in the afterlife and is illustrated by the following story. There was a man, Er, who died in a battle. Ten days later, though, when they brought his body home to be buried, it was still fresh while those of the other soldiers were decaying. On the twelfth day, he came back to life and said that when he had died he had come to a place where there were two chasms in the earth and two others in the heavens. There



were also two judges judging each soul, hanging signs on them saying either that they were just or describing what they had done to be unjust, then telling the just souls to go up and to the right (to the heavens), and the unjust ones to go down and to the left. As for his soul, they told it to watch and come back to earth to tell the story. He then saw souls coming out of the heavens, incredibly happy, and others coming out of the earth, incredibly unhappy. The ones coming out of the earth said that they had paid ten times over for each unjust thing they had done while on earth, which meant that they had been there for over a thousand years. As for the tyrants who were the worst of the unjust, they suffered longer than anyone else and worse than anyone else, and they had little hope of ever getting out. As for those who were just, "when they had been on the meadow seven days, they must get up and march on the eighth, arriving after four more from where they beheld a straight line, like a pillar, stretched from above, all through heaven and earth, most like the rainbow, but purer and brighter." Book 10, pg. 273, line 616b This light holds all of heaven together, building its entire circumstance, stretched from the tips of the spindle of Necessity, through which turn all of heaven's revolutions. The entire spindle moved together, but there were seven inner circles moving within it, not all at the same speed. However, all moved on the knees of Necessity. On top of each rim, carried around by its motion, was a Siren who sang the same note constantly, all eight notes blending into a harmony. Equally distant from the spindle were Necessity's daughters: Lachesis, of the past, Clotho, of the present, and Atropos, of the future. Regularly, Clotho would touch the spindle's outer circumference to help it spin, Atropos would do the same to the inner ones, and Lachesis would touch both alternately.

When the souls arrived, they went straight to Lachesis, who said that a new round of mortal lives leading to death were beginning. This time, the deities were not choosing for them, but instead, the new souls were allowed to choose the lives that they would lead, in which excellence has no master, and they would have more or less of excellence according to how much they honored her.

Topic Tracking: Excellence 11

Also, guilt belonged to the chooser, because God has no guilt. Then, she threw down the lots that indicated the order in which people would choose. Next, she put all the choices of the different lives, each with an accurate description of the animal, person, their health and the like, but not of the soul, down. Then, she said that all of the lives were tolerable, and that it depended on the judgment of the chooser and his knowledge of the good and the bad, as to what the life he chose would become.

Topic Tracking: The Good 6

For example, the first person to choose went down and took the life of a great tyrant, choosing out of greed and stupidity. Most people chose their lives depending on the habits of their former lives. After all had chosen, they went up to Lachesis in the order in which they had drawn, and to each she presented the deity it had chosen to be guardian of its life. The deity then led the soul up to Clotho to ratify the destiny chosen under her hand and whirl of the needle. After touching that, each then went to Atropos'



spinning to make destiny's web irreversible. Then, they passed under the throne of Necessity and left. When they emerged, they marched through terrible heat to the Plain of Lethe, where they camped and drank until drunk, forgetting everything. In the middle of the night, there was thunder and earthquake and all were suddenly swept in different directions to birth. However, although Er saw all this he did not participate, but came back to tell the story.

Thus the tale was preserved, and, if we listen to it, it may save us when it is our time to choose. However, before this we must believe that the soul is immortal, and strong enough to endure all good and all evil. If we do believe this and practice justice accordingly, we will have won the prize for justice both in this world and in the thousand-year journey.

Topic Tracking: Justice 15

And so Socrates concludes his argument.