

Theology of Aristotle on *Enneads* 4:8

CHAPTER ONE

[1-58; cf. *Enneads* 4:7-8; Lewis, pp. 219-231]

To proceed: Now that it has been demonstrated and confirmed that the soul is not a body and does not die or decay or perish, but is abiding and everlasting, we wish to study concerning her also how she departs from the world of mind and descends to this corporeal world of sense and enters this gross transient body which falls under genesis and corruption.

We say that every substance that is only intellectual possesses intellectual life and is impassive and therefore the substance reposes in the world of mind, fixed in it and perpetual, not departing from it or proceeding to another place, because it has no place toward which to move from its own place, nor does it desire any place other than its own. Every intellectual substance which has a certain desire is posterior to the substance which is mind alone, with no desire. When the mind acquires a desire, it proceeds because of that desire in a certain direction and does not abide in its original place, for it desires greatly to act and to adorn the things which it has seen in the mind. Like the woman who has conceived and to whom the birth pangs have come, so that she may bring forth what is in her womb, so, when the mind is informed with the form of desire, it desires to bring out into actuality the form that is in it, and it longs greatly for that, and the birth pangs seize it and it brings it [the form] forth into actuality because of its desire for the sensible world.

When the mind receives the desire to go downwards, the soul is informed by it and the soul is then a mind informed with the form of desire, although the soul has sometimes a universal desire and sometimes a particular desire. When she has a universal desire she fashions the universal forms into actuality and governs them intellectually, without departing from her universal world. When she desires the particular things, which are forms of her universal forms, she adorns them and increases them in purity and beauty, and corrects what error has occurred in them, and governs them in a higher and loftier way than their proximate cause, which is the heavenly bodies.

When the soul enters the particular things she does not become confined in them. I mean, she is not in the body as though confined in it, but is in it and outside it. Sometimes the soul is in the body and sometimes she is outside the body. For when she desires to proceed and to manifest her activities, she moves from the first world at first, then to the second world, then to the third world, but, although she moves and proceeds from her own world until she comes to the third world, the mind does not depart from her and it is by means of it that she does what she does. But although the soul does what she does by means of the mind, yet the mind does not leave its intellectual, lofty sublime place, being that which performs the sublime, noble and wonderful activities through the medium of the soul, and which does the good in this world of sense, and which adorns things by making some of them everlasting and some transient, though that is through the medium of the soul. It performs its activities by means of her because the mind is an entity everlasting in its everlasting activity.

As for the soul of other animals, such of it as proceeds in error enters the bodies of beasts, but of necessity does not die or perish. If any other kind of soul is postulated in this world, it is from that living nature, and the thing which comes from the living nature must be living too, and must be the cause of the life of the thing to which it comes. Similarly the souls of plants are all living, for all souls are emitted from one beginning, though each of them has a life appropriate and suited to her, and all of them are substances not bodies and do not admit division. Now the soul of man has three parts, vegetative, animal and rational, departing from the body at its decomposition and dissolution, but the pure clear soul which is not sullied or defiled by the defilements of the body, when it departs from the world of sense, will return to those substances speedily and with no delay. But the soul that has united with the body and submitted herself to it and become as if she were corporeal because of the extent of her immersion in the delights and pleasures of the body does not, when she parts from the body, reach her own world until by great toil she has cast away from herself every impurity and defilement that attached to her from the body. Then does she return to her own world whence she came, but does not perish or cease to be, as some thing, because she is attached to her origin, even though she be far from it and remote. It is impossible that any of the essence should perish; for they are true essences, which do not pass away or perish, as we have frequently said.

As for what needed to be said for the benefit of those who accept nothing save with reasoning and proof, we have already completed a brief but true and correct account of that. The things that need to be said, for the benefit of those who believe nothing save on perception of the senses, we are going to treat of and shall set them at the head of our discussion of the thing on which ancients and moderns agreed. What the ancients agreed was that, when the soul becomes defiled and follows the lead of the body in her pleasures, wrath lights on her from God. Thereupon the man desires to turn back from his bodily activities, rejects the pleasures of the body, and begins to humble himself before God and to ask Him to forgive his sins and show him favor. On this are agreed men eminent and base, and they agree also in asking God's mercy on their dead and their departed forebears, and imploring His forgiveness for them. Were they not certain that the soul survives and does not die, this would not be their custom and would not be as it were a natural, necessary, obligatory practice. They say that many of the souls that have been in these bodies and have emerged from them and passed on to their own world do not cease to aid those who ask their aid. The proof of this is in the temples built for them and called by their names. When one in need comes to them they help him and do not send him back disappointed. This and the like proves that the soul that passes from this world to the other does not die or perish, but is alive with a life abiding, not passing away or suffering extinction.

A statement of his that is like an allegory of the universal soul:

Often have I been alone with my soul and have doffed my body and laid it aside and become as if I were naked substance without body, so as to be inside myself, outside all other things. Then do I see within myself such beauty and splendor as I do remain marveling at and astonished, so that I know that I am one of the parts of the sublime, surpassing, lofty, divine world, and possess active life. When I am certain of that, I lift

my intellect up from that world into the divine world and become as if I were placed in it and cleaving to it, so as to be above the entire intelligible world, and seem to be standing in that sublime and divine place. And there I see such light and splendor as tongues cannot describe nor ears comprehend. When that light and splendor overwhelm me and I have not strength to endure it, I descend from mind to thought and reflection.

When I enter the world of thought, thought veils that light and splendor from me, and I am left wondering how I have fallen from that lofty and divine place and am come to the place of thought, when my soul once had the power to leave her body behind and return to herself and rise to the world of mind and then to the divine world until she entered the place of splendor and light, which is the cause of all light and splendor. Wonderful it is too how I have seen my soul filled with light, while she was still in my body like her appearance, not leaving it. But when I think long and cast my gaze about and am like one bemused, I remember Heraclitus, for he ordered that one should seek and inquire about the sublime substance of the soul and should desire to ascend to that sublime and exalted world. He said: Who desires that and raises himself up to the exalted world is necessarily requited with the best of all possible rewards. No one must neglect the search and the desire to raise himself into that world, though he suffer fatigue and toil, for before him there is that ease after which there is no fatigue and no toil. His intention in these words is to incite us to seek the intelligible things, that we may find them as he found them and attain them as he attained them. Now Empedocles says that the souls were in the high and sublime place, and when they erred they fell into this world; it was as a fatigue from the anger of God that he too came to this world, for when he came down to this world he came to help those souls whose minds have become contaminated, and became like a madman, calling men at the top of his voice and bidding them reject this world and what is in it and to go back to their own original world, the high and sublime. And he bade them ask pardon of God, that they might thereby attain the ease and well-being that was their state before. With this philosopher Pythagoras agreed in his summons to mankind, though it was in parables and enigmas that he spoke to them. He ordered them to abandon and reject this world and to return to the first, the real world.

The sublime and Divine Plato has described the soul and has said many beautiful things about her, and has mentioned in many places how the soul descends and enters this world and that she will surely return to her own world, the true, the first world. His description of the soul is a good one; he so describes her that we seem to behold her with our own eyes. We shall mention what this philosopher says, but we must first understand that when the philosopher describes the soul he does not use the description in every place in which he mentions her, for if he were to describe her, and described her in only one way, the audience, on hearing his description, would know what the philosopher's view was. His descriptions of the soul differ because he does not employ sense-perception in the description of the soul, and rejects the senses in every instance. He disparages and deplores the association of soul with body, for the soul is in the body only as a prisoner, under close restraint, without speech. Then he says: The body is to the soul as a cavern.

Empedocles agrees with him on that except that he calls the body rust, and by rust Empedocles simply means this world in its entirety. Plato then says that the release of the soul from its bonds is its emerging from the cave of this world, and its rising to its own world of intelligence. In his book called *Phaedrus* he says that the cause of the soul's

descent to this world is simply the loss of her feathers and when she has grown new ones she rises to her original world, but in one of his books he says the causes of the soul's descent to this world are various: for some descend for a sin they have committed and it is for retribution and punishment of their sins that they descend to this world, and some descend for another cause, but he confined his remarks to deploring the soul's descent and her dwelling in these bodies. It is in his book called Timaeus that he says this. Then Plato speaks of this world and praises it, saying that it is a sublime and blessed substance and that it is from the good Creator that the soul comes into this world, for when the Creator fashioned this world he sent the soul to it and set her in it, so that the world might be alive and possessed of mind, for it was necessary that this world, being magnificent and finished to the last degree of perfection, should not be without mind, and it would be impossible for the world to have mind without having soul; for this reason the Creator sent soul to this world and made her dwell in it. Then he sent our souls and they settled in our bodies so that this world might be complete and perfect so that it might not be inferior to the world of mind in completeness and perfection, because there had to be in the world of the senses whatever kinds of creatures there were in the world of mind.

We may derive sublime matters from this philosopher on the study of the soul that is in us and of the universal soul, so that we may know what she is and through what cause she descended to this body, and became associated with it, and so that we may know the nature of this world and what manner of thing it is and in what place in the world she dwells, and whether the soul descended to it and became associated with it willingly or perforce or in any other way. We derive from him some further knowledge, more sublime than the knowledge of the soul; that is, we learn whether the creator fashioned the things rightly or whether that work of his was not rightly done, and whether his linking the soul to this world and to our bodies was right or not, for the ancients disagreed over this and discussed it at length.

We intend to begin by giving the view of this surprising and sublime man on these things we have mentioned. We say that when the sublime Plato saw that the mass of philosophers were at fault in their description of the essences, for when they wished to know about the true essences they sought them in this sensible world, because they rejected intelligible things and turned to the sensible world alone, wishing to attain by sense-perception all things, both the transitory and the eternally abiding – when he saw that they had strayed from the road that would bring them to truth and right, and that sense perception had won the mastery over them, he pitied them for this and was generous towards them and guided them to the road that would bring them to the truths of things. He distinguished between mind and sense-perception and between the nature of the essences and the sensible things. He established that the true essences were everlasting, not changing their state, and that the sensible things were transitory, falling under genesis and corruption.

When he had completed this distinction he began by saying: The cause of the true essences, which are bodiless, and of the sensible things, which have bodies, is one and the same, and that is the first true essence, meaning by that, the Creator, the Maker. Then he said: the first creator, who is the cause of the everlasting intelligible essences and of the transitory sensible essences, is absolute good, and good cleaves to nothing save itself. Every good in the upper world and in the lower world comes not from their nature, nor from the nature of the intelligible essences or of the transitory sensible essences, but from

that high nature. Every nature, intelligible and sensible, has its beginning in that, for the good is sent in the worlds only from the Creator, for he is the originator of things, and from him are sent life and souls into this world. And this world holds fast only to that life and those souls which come from above into this world. It is these souls that adorn this world so that it may not be disrupted or perish.

Then he said: this world is compounded of matter and form. What informed matter was a nature more exalted than matter and superior to it, viz. the intellectual soul. It was only by the power of the sublime mind within the soul that she came to inform matter. Mind came to give the soul power to inform matter only by virtue of the first essence, which is the cause of the other essences, those of mind, of soul and of matter, and all natural things. Only because of the first agent did the sensible things become beautiful and splendid, but this action took place only through the medium of mind and soul.

Then he said: It is the true first essence that pours forth life, first upon mind, then upon soul, then upon the natural things, this being the Creator, who is absolute good. How well and how rightly does this philosopher describe the creator when he says: He created mind, soul, and nature and all things else. But whoever hears the philosopher's words must not take them literally and imagine that he said that the Creator fashioned the creation in time. If anyone imagined that of him from his mode of expression, he did but so express himself through wishing to follow the custom of the ancients. The ancients were compelled to mention time in connection with the beginning of creation because they wanted to describe the genesis of things, and they were compelled to introduce time into their description of genesis and into their description of the creation – which was not in time at all – in order to distinguish between the exalted first causes and the lowly secondary causes. The reason is that when a man wishes to elucidate and recognize cause he is compelled to mention time, since the cause is bound to be prior to its effect, and one imagines that priority means time and that every agent performs his action in time. But it is not so; not every agent performs his action in time, nor is every cause prior to its effect in time. If you wish to know whether this act is temporal or not, consider the agent; if he be subject to time then is the act subject to time, inevitably, and if the cause is temporal so too is the effect. The agent and the cause indicate the nature of the act and the effect, if they be subject to time or not subject to it.

CHAPTER SEVEN: The Noble Soul

[1-50; cf. Enneads 4:8; Lewis, pp. 243-251]

We say that, although the noble lordly soul has left her high world and descended to this low world, she did that by an aspect of her high ability and power, in order to give form to and to administer the essence that is after her. If she slips away from this world after giving form to it and administering it, and quickly enters her own world, her descent to the evil world hurts her not at all; indeed she benefits by it, for she derives from this world the knowledge of evil, and learns what its nature is, after expending her powers on it and manifesting her noble deeds and acts, the quiescent, that were within her when she was in the world of mind. Had she not displayed her activities and expended her powers and made them fall under vision, those powers and activities would have been idle in her

and the soul would have forgotten the sound and perfect virtues and deeds, if they were hidden and not apparent. Were this so, she would not know the power of the soul and would not know her nobility, for action is but the indication and manifestation of the hidden power, and if the power of the soul lay hidden and did not appear, she would decay and become as though she had never been. A proof that this is so consists in created beings, for while they are beautiful, splendid, highly adorned, perfected, falling under vision, the beholder of them, if he be intelligent, does not wonder at the ornateness of their exterior but looks at their interior and wonders at their creator and originator, and does not doubt that he is at the extreme of beauty and splendor, with no limit to his power, since he made the like of these, full of beauty and loveliness.

If the Creator did not originate the things and were simply alone, the things would be unseen and their beauty and splendor would not be manifest and plain. If that one essence stood within its own self and restrained its power and activity and light, then nothing would exist of the abiding essences or of the changing transient essences, and the multiplicity of things originated from the one would not be in their present state, nor would the causes produce their effects or proceed along the ways of genesis and the essences.

If the eternal things and the transient things which fall under genesis and corruption were not existent, the first One would not be a true cause, and how is it possible that the things should not exist, their cause being a true cause and a true light and a true good? If the first One is like that, that is, a true cause, then its effect is a true effect, and if it is a true light then the recipient of that light is a true recipient, and if it is a true good and the good emanates, then that on which it emanates is true also. If this is so, then it was necessary that the creator should not be alone without creating any sublime thing to receive his light, that is, the mind; similarly it was necessary that the mind should not be alone without producing anything to receive its activity and its sublime power and its spreading light, so for that it produced the soul.

Similarly the soul had not to be alone in that upper world of mind, without there being anything to receive affections from her. Therefore she descended to the lower world in order to make manifest her noble actions and power, and this is necessary for every nature, that it perform its activities and cause affections in the thing below it, and that the thing be acted upon by and receive the affections of the thing next above it, for the higher thing causes affections in the thing that is lower. There is none of the things of the mind or of nature that stands still in itself without traveling the way of action, unless the thing be the last of things in weakness, its action hardly to be discerned.

The proof that the natural things cannot stand, without traveling the way of action, consists in the seeds that are deposited in the interior of the earth, for the seed begins from a place without size or weight, as if it were a spiritual thing and no body. It continues to travel the way of action until it emerges from itself, for it performs its activity and fashions its form. It exists in that form, returning to itself, strong to make the like of that form many times, for in it are the intellectual active words, attached inseparably, though they are hidden, not falling under our eyes. When it performs its action and falls under our eyes, its mighty wonderful power is apparent, which of necessity could not stand still in itself without traveling along the ways of genesis and action: so a fortiori the mighty things of the mind must of necessity not stand still and imprison their power and influence and restrain them jealously within themselves, and

fail to follow over the course of action, until they come to the thing which cannot receive their affections save weakly, or affect anything else, through the slightness of its reception of the affection of the agent. If this is so we say that the soul pours forth her power over the whole of this world, by her high and sublime power, and there is none of the bodily things, mobile or immobile, without the power of the soul or outside her excellent nature; every body obtains of her power and good according to the extent of its power to receive that power and that good. We say that the first affection the soul causes is in matter, because it is the first of sensory things. Since it is the first of sensory things it is entitled to receive the good from the soul first – what I mean by good is form – then after that each one of the sensory things obtains a share of that good according to the extent of its power to receive that good.

We say that when matter receives form from the soul nature is originated, then she informs nature and makes her receptive to being, perforce. It is because of the power of the soul and the high causes that have been put in her that nature becomes receptive to being. Then the action of the mind stops at nature and the beginning of being. Being is the last of the intellectual formative causes and the first of the engendering causes, and of necessity the active causes that form substances cannot stop before they come to nature. That is so on account of the first cause, which made the intellectual essences into active causes, formative of the accidental forms which fall under genesis and corruption.¹

For the sensible world is but an indication of the world of mind and of the intellectual substances within it, and evidence of their immense powers, their noble virtues and their good, which boils up and bubbles over. We say that the intelligible things cleave to the sensible things, but the first creator does not cleave to the intelligible things; rather is he the one who holds on to all things, intelligible and sensible, though the intelligible things are true essences, for they originate from the first essence with no intermediation, and the sensible things are perishable essences, for they are pictures and likenesses of the true essences; their maintenance and their continuation by genesis and procreation is in order that they may abide and continue in imitation of the permanent continuing things of the mind.

We say that nature is of two kinds, an intelligible and a sensible. When the soul is in the intelligible world she is superior and nobler, and when she is in the lower world she is baser and viler on account of the body she has entered. Even though the soul is intellectual and from the upper intelligible world, she must inevitably acquire something from the sensible world and enter it, for her nature coalesces with the intelligible world and with the sensible world. So the soul must not be blamed and censured for leaving the mental world and for coming into being in this world, since she is placed between both worlds. The reason why the soul becomes in this state is that, although she is one of those noble divine substances, she is the last of those substances and the first of the sensible natural substances, and when she becomes a neighbor to the natural sensible world she must of necessity not withhold from it her virtues but must pour them forth on it. Therefore she pours forth her powers on it and adorns it exceedingly. She may acquire of its vileness unless she beware and guard herself against being defiled by anything of its base reprehensible conditions. We say that, it being obligatory for the soul to pour forth her powers on this sensible world and to adorn it, she was not content to adorn its

¹ [cf. Greek saying 2: And he said, matter is the last of the divine intellectual things and the beginning of bodily sensory things, though it is a material beginning, not an active beginning].

exterior, but penetrates into its interior and imprinted in it such powers and active words as the seeker after the knowledge of things wonders at, and shirks describing and contemplating.

The proof that this is so – I mean that the soul adorns the interior of bodies more than their exterior – is nature, for she dwells in the interior of bodies, not in their exterior, and the confirmation of that is that she manifests her activities only from inside, not from outside, for we often see plants and other growing and animal things whose exterior has no beauty or splendor, but it is not long before there are sent forth from their interior beautiful and splendid colors and pleasant scents and wonderful fruits. Were it not that the soul penetrates into the natural bodies and brings about in them her wonderful affections of many activities, continuously – I mean nature – the body would speedily decay and perish and would not abide and bear fruit as it does now. For when the soul sees the splendor and beauty of the body, she imprints nature in it and pours forth her exalted power on it and introduces into it active words so that they may perform wonderful activities which astonish the beholder.

We say that although the soul has penetrated into the body she is capable of emerging from it and leaving it behind and returning to her own upper world of mind and setting together the two worlds, and when she sets together the two worlds and their virtues she knows the superiority of that world by experience, so as to have recognized accurately the high and noble virtues and the superiority of that world over this world, for if the knower is weak of nature and has experiences of evil and knows it by experience, that is one of the things which increase him in the knowledge of good, by learning and demonstration, this being better than that he should know evil by knowledge only, not by experience.

We say that just as the mind cannot stand still in itself because of the perfecting power and the overflowing light in it, but needs to move and to travel either up or down – and it cannot travel up so as to pour forth its light on what is above it because there is no originated thing above it for it to pour forth its light on, since that which is above it is the first originator; and consequently it travels down by the necessary law which the first originator put in it, and pours forth its light and power on the things below it, until it reaches the soul, and when it reaches here it stops and does not pass her, because the soul is the end of the world of mind, as we have often said. When the mind descends until it comes to the soul, and produces in her such affections as it does, it leaves her alone with the other activities and moreover returns and rises upwards until it reaches the first cause. It stops there and does not descend below, for it knows by experience that staying there and cleaving to the first cause is better and more advantageous than the light and the power and the other virtues. Just so, when the soul is filled with light and power and the other virtues, she cannot stand still in herself, because of the boiling-up of the other virtues and their desire for action.

So she travels down, not traveling up because the mind does not need any of her virtues, for it is the cause of her virtues. Since she cannot travel up she travels down and pours forth of her light and her other virtues on whatever is beneath her, and fills this world with light and beauty and splendor. When she produces in this sensible world such affections as she does, she returns, coming back to her world of mind, and holds fast to it and clings to it and knows, with a knowledge free from doubt, that the world of mind is

nobler and more sublime than the world of sense, and she continues to contemplate it and does not desire to come back to this world at all.

We say that when soul enters these base sensory things she rushes to the things that are weak of power and little of light, for when she does in this world what she does and brings about the wonderful affections she regards it as necessary not to relinquish them so that they perish speedily, for they are pictures, and the picture, if the painter does not supply it with colors, disappears and decays and is obliterated, so that its beauty is not apparent and comes to naught, nor is the wisdom and power of the painter discerned. Since this is so, and it is the soul that brings about these wonderful affections in this world, she contrives that these affections should be permanent, for when she returns to her world and enters it she observes that splendor and light and power and takes of that light and power and casts it into this world and supplies it with light and life and power. This is the condition of the soul and thus does she administer this world and cleave to it.

We wish to explain our view concerning that, and shall venture to explain it thus: we say that the soul does not descend in her entirety to this lower world of sense, neither the universal soul nor our souls, but part of her remains in the world of mind, not quitting it, since it is not possible that a thing should quit its world completely save by its corruption and emergence from its being. So even though the soul does descend to this world she is attached to her own world, for it is possible for her to be there without withdrawing from the world.

If anyone says: Why do we not sense that world as we sense this world? We reply: because the sensible world dominates us and our souls have become full of its reprehensible lusts, our years of the abundant clamor and vociferation within it, so we do not sense that intelligible world or know what the soul brings us from it. We can sense the intelligible world and what the soul brings us from it only when we rise above this world and reject its base lusts and do not occupy ourselves with anything of its conditions: Then we can sense it and the thing which descends on us from it through the medium of the soul, while we cannot sense the thing that comes to be in one of the parts of the soul before that comes over the whole soul, such as desire, for we cannot sense it so long as it remains fixed in the appetitive faculty of the souls. We sense it when it proceeds to the sensory faculty and to the cogitative and intellective faculty, but before it enters these two faculties we do not sense it, even though it remains there a long while.

We say that every soul has something that is joined to the body below and is joined to the mind above. The universal soul controls the universal body, by a part of her faculties, without fatigue or toil, because she does not control it by thought, as our souls control our bodies, but she controls it in a universal intellectual way, with no thought or reflection. She controls it without reflection because it is a universal body with no variance in it: its part is like its whole and she is not controlling varying mixtures or dissimilar members, so as to need a varying control, but it is one body, connected, or similar members, and one nature with no variance in it. The individual soul which is in these individual bodies is noble too, controlling the bodies nobly, although she controls them only with fatigue and toil, for she controls them with thought and reflection. She reflects and thinks only because sense-perception has made her busy with the study of sensible things, and pains and sorrows have been introduced into her by such of the things outside nature as have been brought to her. This is what disturbs her and bemuses her and prevents her from casting her gaze on herself or on the part of herself that abides

in the world of mind, because immediate concerns have dominated her, such as reprehensible desire and ignoble pleasure, so she rejects her eternal concerns in order to obtain by their rejection the pleasures of this world of sense, not realizing that she has removed herself from the pleasure that is true pleasure, since she has chosen the transient pleasure with no permanence in it or constancy. If the soul can reject sense and the transient sensory things and does not hold fast to them, she then controls this body with the slightest effort, with no fatigue or toil, and assimilates herself to the universal soul and becomes like her in conduct and control, with no difference or variation between them.

Additional chapter of the *Theology* to read:

CHAPTER TEN: The First Cause and the Things that Originate from It

[1-33; cf. *Enneads* 5:2; Lewis, pp. 291-297]

The absolute One is the cause of all things and is not like any of the things; rather, it is the beginning of the thing and is not the things; rather, all things are in it and it is not in any of the things, for all things gush forth from it; in it is their sustenance and support and to it is their returning. If anyone says: How is it possible for the things to be from the simple One, in which there is no duality or plurality in any respect? We reply: Because it is One, absolute and simple, containing none of the things, and it being pure One all things gush forth from it. For while it has no identity, identity gushes forth from it.

I say, abridging the argument, that while it is none of the things the things all come from it. But, although all the things gush forth from it, the first identity, by which I mean the identity of the mind, gushes forth from it first, without intermediary. Then there gush forth from it all the identities of the things that are in the upper world and the lower world, through the medium of the identity of the mind and the intelligible world. I say too that the absolute One is above completeness and perfection. The sensible world is defective because it is originated from the true absolute One, which is above completeness. It is not possible that the thing which is above completeness should originate the defective because it is originated from the complete thing, which is mind; mind is complete and perfect because it is originated from the true absolute One, which is above completeness. It is not possible that the thing which is above completeness should originate the defective thing directly, nor is it possible for the complete thing to originate anything complete like itself, because origination is deficiency, by which I mean that the originated is not of the rank of the originator but is beneath it.

The proof that the absolute One is complete and above completeness is that it has no need of anything and does not seek to acquire anything, and because of the intensity of its completeness and super-abundance another thing is produced from it. For the thing which is above completeness cannot produce unless the thing be complete: otherwise it is not above completeness. For if the complete thing produces anything, then a fortiori the thing which is above completeness produces, because it produces the complete thing than

which none of the things produced can be more powerful, more splendid or more sublime. For when the true One which is above completeness originates the complete thing, that complete thing turns to its originator and casts its gaze on it and is filled with light and splendor from it and becomes mind. The true One originates the identity of the mind because of the intensity of its repose. When that identity looks at the true One it gives form to the mind, for when the first identity is originated from the true One it stands and casts its gaze on the One so as to see it, and then becomes mind. When the first originated identity becomes mind its activities begin to imitate the true One, for when it casts its gaze on it and sees it to the extent of its ability and becomes mind, the true One pours forth on it many immense powers. When the mind becomes possessed of immense power it originates the form of the soul without moving, in imitation of the true One, for the mind is originated by the true One while at rest, and similarly the mind originates the soul while at rest also, not moving. But the true One originates the identity of the mind and the mind originates the form of the soul from the identity which is originated from the true One through the medium of the identity of the mind.

Now since the soul is caused by an effect she cannot perform her activity without movement, while at rest, but performs it by movement and originates an image. Her activity is called 'an image' because it is a perishable, impermanent and transient activity, for it takes place by movement, and movement does not produce the lasting thing but produces the perishable thing; otherwise its activity would be nobler than itself and the act would be permanent and lasting and the agent perishable and evanescent – I mean movement – and this is highly objectionable. If the soul wishes to do something she looks at the thing whence was her beginning, and when she looks she is filled with power and light, and moves in a way other than that in which she moves in the direction of her cause. For if she wishes to move towards her cause she moves upwards and if she wishes to bring about an image she moves downwards and originates an image, which is sensation and the nature in simple bodies and plants and animals and every substance. The substance of the soul does not separate from the substance that is prior to it, but is attached to it, for the soul proceeds in all the lowly substances until in some fashion she reaches the plants. For the nature of plants is one of her effects, and in consequence the soul becomes attached to them. But although the soul proceeds until she reaches the plants and enters them, she enters them because when she wishes to bring about her effects she proceeds downwards until, in her proceeding and her desire for what is base, she originates an individual.

For when the soul is of the mind and faces it, she does not depart. When she is heedless and her gaze is deflected from it, she leaves it behind and travels downwards from the first of the sensory originated things until she reaches the last of them, and brings about the beautiful effects, but although they are beautiful they are ugly and vile when compared with the sublime things which exist in the world of mind. The soul brings about these effects simultaneously with her desiring the vilest and lowest thing. When she desires it she brings about an effect in it, and she becomes, simultaneously with sensation, more vile than every vile thing. Particular things become beautiful in the presence of sensation because sensation is of their realm, and like rejoices and delights in its like, which in the presence of the sublime intellectual things they are extremely ugly and vile.

We say that when the soul influences nature and sensation and the other things of her realm, she grades each of them in its rank and arranges them in perfect order, none of them being able to trespass from its own rank on that of another. But although the sensory natural things have an order and arrangement, their order is not the order of the sublime things of the mind, and their arrangement is other than that arrangement. For the order of the natural things is vile and low, falling under error, while the order of the sublime things is noble and honorable, and cannot possibly fall under error because it is eternally right. The order of the sublime things is right because it is ordered by the first cause, and the order of the lowly things falls under error because it is an order originated by the thing caused, namely, the soul. The soul that is in the plant is as if she were a part of the plant, except that she is a part baser than the other parts of the soul, and the most ignorant of her parts, for she travels downwards until she enters these base lowly bodies. When the soul is in the brute thing she is also a part of it, although she is a part more noble and honorable than the vegetative part of the soul, namely, sense-perception. When the soul enters man she is the most excellent and noble of the parts of the soul, for she is then moving and perceptive, possessing mind and discrimination, because her motion will then be of the realm of the mind; I mean that the motion and sense-perception of the soul will be due to her cogitating and knowing. When the soul is in a plant, her power, which will be in the plant, is fixed in the root of the plant; the proof of that is that if you cut one of the branches of a plant which are at the top or in the middle of a tree the tree does not dry up, while if you cut the root of it, it will dry up. If anyone says: If the power of the soul departs from the tree after its root has been cut, then whither does that power or that soul go? We reply: She goes to the place whence she has not departed and that place is the world of mind. Similarly, if part of the brute created passes away, the soul which was in it proceeds until she comes to the intelligible world. She comes to that world because the place of soul is mind, whence she does not depart. Mind is not in a place; therefore soul is not in a place, and if she is not in a place then she is doubtless above and below and in the whole without being dissected and divided by the division of the whole. Therefore soul is in every place and is not in any place. We say that, when the soul travels upwards from below and does not quite reach the upper world but stops between the two worlds, she is of the intelligible and of the sensible things, and becomes intermediate between the worlds, that is, between mind (on the one hand) and sense-perception and nature (on the other), but if she wishes to travel upwards she does so with the slightest of efforts and that is no burden for her; the reverse of when she is in the lower world and wishes to ascend to the world of mind, for that is one of the things that are a burden to her.

You must understand that mind and soul and the other intelligible things are from the first originator, not passing away or disappearing, on account of their originating from the first cause without intermediary, whereas nature and sense-perception and the other natural things perish and fall under corruption because they are effects of causes that are caused, that is, of the mind through the medium of the soul. But of the natural things one has a longer duration than the others, being the most lasting: that depends on the remoteness of the thing from its cause, or its proximity, and on the multitude or paucity of causes in it; for when the causes of the thing are few its duration is longer, and if its causes are many the thing is of shorter duration. We must understand that natural things are linked one to another; when one of them passes away it comes to its neighbor above

until it reaches the heavenly bodies, then soul, then mind. All things are fixed in mind and mind is fixed in the first cause, and the first cause is the beginning and end of all things: from it do they originate and to it is their returning, as we have often said.

[34-136; cf. Enneads 6:7; Lewis, pp. 439-463]

Some odd points

We say that the first mind contains all things. For the first thing which the First Maker made, namely, mind, he made possessing many forms, and in each one of the forms he put all the things appropriate to that form. He made the form and its states together, not one thing after another but all of them together and simultaneously. For he originated the man of mind containing all the attributes appropriate to him; he did not originate part of his attributes first and part last, as is the case in the man of sense-perception, but originated them all together, simultaneously. If this is so, we say that all the things that are in man here existed at first, no attribute being added to him at all that was not there. Man in the upper world is complete and perfect, and everything attributed to him is in him perpetually.

If anyone says: The attributes of the higher man are not all in him; on the contrary he receives other attributes whereby he becomes complete, we reply: Then he falls under genesis and corruption, for the things which admit increase and decrease are in the world of genesis and corruption. They come to admit increase and decrease because their maker is defective, namely nature, for nature does not originate all the attributes of things together, and therefore natural things admit increase and decrease. But the things in the upper world do not admit increase and decrease, because their originator is complete and perfect, originating their being and their attributes together, simultaneously, and they therefore become complete and perfect, and if they are complete and perfect they are therefore always in one state, they being 'all things' in the sense we mentioned above, and that is that none of the attributes or any of those forms can be mentioned without your finding it in it. We say that every thing which falls under genesis and corruption is either from a maker who reflects or from a maker who does not make the thing and its attributes simultaneously, but makes one thing after another. Thereby the natural thing comes to fall under corruption, and the beginning of its being comes before the completion of it. If the thing is like that, one may ask what it is and why it is, because its completion is not found in its beginning. Now the everlasting things are not originated by reflection or thought, for it is the Everlasting who originates them and the Everlasting does not reflect, because he is complete, and the complete performs its activity complete, in the extreme of completion, no increase in it or decrease being necessary.

If anyone says: It is possible that the First Maker may first make something and then add something else to it so that it may be more beautiful and more excellent, we reply: If he first originates the thing in a certain state and then adds something else to it, if it be beautiful, then the first act was not beautiful, and this does not befit the First Maker, that he perform an act that is not beautiful, for he is the first beauty, the extreme of beauty. If the act of the First maker is beautiful then it is always beautiful, because between it and the First Maker there is no intermediary, for in him are all things. If this is so, we say that the upper world is beautiful because it contains all things, and therefore

the first form is beautiful, because it contains the sum of things. For if you say 'substance' or 'knowledge' or something resembling these things, you will find that in the first form, and therefore we say that it is complete, because all things are to be found in it. For it grasps matter and has power over it, and the reason why it comes to have power over matter is that it does not leave anything of it without shape. It would be weakening knowledge or anything else if it left out any of the forms and did not put it in it, for example the eye or any of the other organs.

The first form being such that nothing of matter eludes it without its impressing form on it, someone may ask why they came to be. We reply: Because in the form are all things. If he says: Why did the hand come to be? We reply: Because in the form are all things. If you say: These instruments of perception come to be in the living that it may thereby preserve itself from harm, we reply: You mean by that, that in the first form is the preservation of the substance, and this is one of the things that are of use in the genesis of the thing. If this is so, we say: Then the substance was existent in the first form, for it is the substance, and if this is so then the form which is in the upper world contains all the things that are in the lower world, because if the thing is with its cause and in its cause, and its cause also is a word, complete, perfect and beautiful, and it is what becomes substance and becomes its real self, then it is one on account of the cause which is near to it without intermediary. If this is as we have described, we revert and say that if all things are in the intellectual form, and sense-perception is one of the things, sense-perception is always in all the form of the soul because when the soul is there she is purely intellectual.

Mind is complete and perfect in all things at first, and is a cause of what is beneath it. In whatever condition we see the intellectual soul at the last, she would be in that condition at first, while in the upper world: for the cause there is one, completing at first, while in the upper world: for the cause there is one, completing what it beneath it, because in it are all things. We therefore say that man there was not only intellectual, sense-perception being added to him when he hastened towards the world of genesis so that he became percipient: on the contrary, he was percipient there and intellectual too. If anyone says: Soul was potentially percipient in the upper world, and when she entered the world of genesis she became percipient in actuality, because the perception is prior to the percepts, we reply: This is absurd, for there is nothing in the upper world percipient in potentiality: on this the principal philosophers are agreed. It is repugnant that there should be in the upper world anything always percipient in potentiality and that it should then be in this world percipient in actuality, and that the potentiality of the soul should be actuality until she becomes base because of her descent in the base lower world.

This problem may also be resolved in another way. We say that we wish to describe the intellectual man, who is in the upper world, but we wish, before doing that, to know the man in the sensory world. We say that we have no accurate knowledge of him, and if we do not know this man how can we think it right to say that we know the man who is in the upper world? Perhaps some think that this man is that man, and that they are one thing. We shall make this the starting-point of our inquiry, and say: Do you think this sensory man is the definition of some soul other than the soul whereby the man becomes a living thinking man? Or is this soul man? Or is it the soul which performs her activities by means of a body that is man? If man is the reasoning living thing, and the living thing is the compound of soul and body, he would not be this definition. Man does not come into being whenever a soul is compounded with a body. If the definition of man

is the compound of a reasoning soul and a body, the fabric of this definition cannot possibly be everlasting, and man be in pieces at the moment of combination of soul and body; no, his quality indicates the man coming into being in the future, not the man we call 'the man of mind and form.' So this definition is not a real definition but the likeness of it, for it does not indicate the quality of the beginning of the thing, which is its true form, but means of which it is its real self. Nor is it the definition of the form of the material man; no, it is the definition of the man composed of soul and body.

If this is so, we say that we do not yet know the man who is really man, because we have not yet described the man properly. That description which we have used above to describe the man applies only to the man compounded of soul and body, not the simple, ideal true man. If anyone wishes to describe a material thing he must describe it together with its matter; he must not describe it only by the word which made that thing. If he wishes to describe something which is not material, let him describe it by the form alone. If this is so, we say that if we wish to describe the true man we shall describe only the form of the man, and that is what anyone will do who wishes to give true definitions of things: he will describe the form of the thing, through which the thing is what it is. The thing through which man is man is his definition, which is inseparable from him, and it is by this that he must be described. If this is so, we say: Do not consider the description of the form which is man to be 'the reasoning living thing', as man is soul and body? Is the description 'the cause of the reasoning living thing'? – 'living' being put in the description instead of 'reasoning life'. If this is so, man is reasoning life, and if man is reasoning life we say: Is it possible that there should be life without soul, since it is soul that gives man reasoning life? If it is so, either man must be an activity of the soul, in which event he is not substance, or the soul is man himself. If the cogitative soul is man it is a necessary consequence of this that, if the soul entered a body other than the body of man, that body would be a man, and this is absurd and impossible, for this name attaches to the soul only when she is together with this human body in which she is now.

If the soul is not man, man must then be a word other than the word of the soul. If this is so, what prevents us from saying that man is the combination of both soul and body, in which case soul would possess some one of the various words? I mean by 'word' activity, for the soul has one of the various activities and it is impossible that there should be an activity without an agent. So with the word which is in the seeds, for seeds are not without soul, and the souls of the seed are not souls in general, for each seed has a soul other than the soul of its neighbor. The verification of that is the difference of their activities. We say that seeds have souls because the active words which are in them are not without soul. It is no wonder that all these should possess words: I mean that they should be active, for the active words are the activities of soul, either the growing soul or the animal soul, which is more obvious and manifest than the growing, for it manifests life more than the growing soul. If the soul is after this description, that is, if she contains active words, there is no doubt that the human soul contains active words which make life and reason. If the material soul, that is, the one reposing in the body, is of this description before she reposes in it, then she is indubitably man. When she forms in the body the image of another man, she perfects it according to what body's capacity for receiving the image of the true man. Just as the painter reproduces the form of the corporeal man in its proper material or in something in which it can be reproduced, and desires to perfect that form and to make it similar to the form of this man, according to the receptive ability of

the element in which he is reproducing it, so that that form is an image of this man, though inferior to him and baser than he by far, for it does not contain the active words of the man, or his life or movement or condition or faculties – just so is this sensory man an image of that first true man, but the painter is the soul. She desired to make this man resemble the true man, for she put in him the attributes of the first man, but she put them in him weak and scanty and insignificant. For the faculties and the life and the condition of this man are weak, whereas in the first man they are extremely strong.

The first man has also strong and manifest senses, stronger and plainer and more manifest than the senses of this man, because these are but images of those, as we have often said. Whoever wishes to see the first, the real man, must be good and excellent, and must have strong senses that will not be impeded at the shining of the lights that radiate upon them, for the first man is a radiating light, containing all the human conditions but in a more excellent and nobler and stronger way. This man is the man whom Plato defined, but he added to his definition, saying that the man who uses the body and performs his functions with bodily instruments is nothing but a soul using the body primarily, while the noble and divine soul uses the body in a secondary manner, that is, through the medium of the animal soul. For when the created animal soul becomes percipient the reasoning living soul follows her and gives her a life nobler and more honorable. I do not say that she descends from the upper world but I do say that she adds to her a life nobler and higher than her own life, for the living reasoning soul does not leave the intelligible world but combines with that life, and this becomes attached to that, and the word of that becomes attached to the word of this soul. Therefore, although the word of this man is weak and obscure, it becomes stronger and more manifest through the shining on it of the word of the high soul, and her combining with it.

If anyone says: If the soul is sentient while she is in the upper world, how is it possible for sense-perception to exist in the honorable high substances, existing in the first substance? We reply: The sense-perception that is in the upper world, that is, in the more honorable intelligible substance, does not resemble this sense-perception which is in this low world, for it does not perceive there like this low sense-perception, because it perceives there in a superior and more sublime fashion, for the sense-perception is appropriate to the sensibilia there. Therefore the sense-perception of this inferior man becomes attached to the sense-perception of the higher man and united with it, like the union of this fire with that sublime fire, and the sense-perception in the soul here is united to the sense-perception in the soul there. If there were in the upper world spherical bodies like these bodies, the soul would perceive and attain them, and the man there would perceive and attain them too. Therefore the secondary man, an image of the first man in the world of bodies, perceives and recognized the bodies. For in the last man, an image of the first man, are the words of the first man, by imitation of them. In man are the words of the man of mind. The man of mind pours forth his light on the second man, the man in the upper world of soul. The second man makes his light shine on the third man, who is in the lower corporeal world. If this is as we have described, we say that within the corporeal man is the man of soul and the man of mind. I do not mean that he is both of them; I mean that he is combined with them, because he is an image of them. For he performs some of the activities of the man of mind and some of the activities of the man of soul, because in the corporeal man are the words of the man of soul and the words of the man of mind, the corporeal man combining both words, I mean that of soul and that

of mind, though in him they are scanty, weak and insignificant, because he is an image of an image. Now it is plain that the first man is sentient, though in a manner more sublime and excellent than the sense-perception from the man in the upper world of mind, as we have made plain and demonstrated.

We say that we have described how sense-perception comes to be in the man and how the sublime things do not derive from the lowly things but on the contrary the lowly things derive from the sublime things, because they are attached to them, and therefore these things resemble those things in all their states, and that the faculties of this man are derived from the sublime man, and that they are joined to those faculties, save that the faculties of this man have percepts other than the percepts of the faculties of the man in the upper world. Those percepts are not bodies and it is not for that man to perceive and see as this man perceives and sees, because those percepts and that sight are different from these percepts and this sight, for he sees things in a way superior to and more sublime than this. Therefore that sight is stronger and apprehends things better than this sight, because that sight sees universals and this sight sees particulars, on account of its weakness. That sight is stronger than this sight because it falls on things more honorable, noble, plain and clear than bodies, and therefore that sense-perception and sight is stronger and more cognitive, and this sight is weak because it apprehends base and lowly things, images of those sublime things. We shall describe those senses and say that they are weak minds, and shall describe those minds and say that they are strong senses. So, as we have described, sense-perception exists in the sublime man.

Someone may say: We grant you that the perception which is in the lowly man is from the sublime man, for it descends upon him from there; what then do you say about the other animals? Do you think that when the First Originator wished to originate them he first pondered over the form of the horse and over the form of the other animals, and then originated them in this world of sense, not in the upper world? We reply: We have explained previously that the First Creator originated all things without reflection or thought, and we have established the proof of this by convincing arguments. If this is as we have said, we say that the First Creator originated the upper world, containing all the forms, complete and perfect, without reflection, for he originated then only with his being, with no other attribute apart from being. Then he originated this world of sense and made it an image of that world. If this is so, we say that when he originated the horse and other animals he did not originate them to be in the lower world but to be in the upper world. For every originated thing that originated from the First Creator directly is in the upper world, complete and perfect, not falling under corruption, whereas every originated thing that originated from him indirectly is in the lower world, falling under corruption. If this is so, then when he originated the horse and other animals he did not originate it to be here but originated it to be in the upper world, the complete and perfect. He originated all the forms of the animals and put them there in a more sublime, noble and honorable way. Then he followed that creation with this creation, of necessity, for the creation could not end in that world, because nothing has the power to block the whole of the first power, the power of powers and originator of the powers; no, it proceeds to the place whither it wishes to proceed and there it stops, without being finite. It is only creation that ends, not the power which originates creation, as we have frequently shown in various places.

Someone may say: Why are these irrational animals there? The rational animals are honorable and noble, and it may be said that they are there because of their nobility of substance and their rank. But this multitude of lustful, brutish and low animals: what beauty does that world gain by their being in it? – indeed, it is likely to be debased when they are in it. Then we reply: The cause of that is what we are about to mention: that the First Creator is only one in all respects and that his being is an originating being, as we have often said. He originated the world as one; it was necessary that the oneness of the originated should not be like the ones of the originator; otherwise the originator and the originated, the cause and the effect, would be one thing. If they were one, the originator would be originated and the originated would be originating, and this is absurd. Since this is absurd, it is inevitable that there should be plurality in the oneness of the originated, since it comes after the One that is one in all respects. For since the originated One is after the One that is in all respects one, it cannot be above the originating One in oneness, nor can it surpass it in oneness; no it must be inferior in oneness to the originating One. If the Creator, who is most excellent of the excellent, is one, then that which is excelled must be more than one, so that it may not be equal with that which excels. If that which is excelled is necessarily not one, there is no doubt but that it is many, because the many is the opposite of the one, for the one is the complete and the many is the deficient. If the excelled is within the realm of plurality, it must be at least two, and it is impossible that each of these two be pure unity; it must be at least two as well, and each of those two is plural, as we have described. The first two may be found to have motion and rest, and both contain mind and life, but that mind is not like one single mind but is a mind containing all minds, every mind being of it, so it is multiple, to the amount of the multiplicity of minds, and more so. The soul which is there is not like one single soul but is as if containing all souls and the faculty of making all souls, for she is a complete life. If this is so, and the living rational soul is one of the souls, she is indubitably there too. If she is there, then man also is there, though there he is a form without matter, and similarly the other animals there are form without matter. Now it is demonstrated that the upper world does not possess many forms, even though the forms of all the animals are in it.

Someone may say: It may be permissible to put the noble animals in the noble upper world, but as for the ignoble animals one cannot say that they are there. For if the rational creature of mind is the noble and honorable creature, the creature with no reason or mind is the ignoble creature. If the noble is in the more honorable place, then the ignoble is not in it but is in the more ignoble place. How can there possibly be in the mind a thing with no mind or reason? By ‘mind’ we mean the whole of the upper world, since it is all mind and contains all the minds and to it belong the minds in their entirety. Then we reply: We wish, before confuting the one who argues thus, to take an example which we may use as a pattern of the things we say are in the upper world, and that is man. We say that the man who is here in the lower world is not like the man in the upper world, as we have demonstrated. If this man is not like that man, then neither are the other animals here like the animals there; no, that one is more excellent and noble than this one, by far. I say that the reason of the man who is there is not like the reason of the man who is here, for the reasoner who is here reflects and thinks, while the reasoner who is there does not reflect or think, being prior to the reflecting thinking reasoner.

If anyone says: How is it that when the sublime reasoner enters this world he reflects and thinks, whereas the other animals do not reflect or think when they come here, though there they are all minds? We reply: Mind there varies, for the mind in man is not the mind that is in the other animals. If the mind in the sublime animals varies, there is no doubt but that reflection and thought vary in them; we may find many sagacious acts in the other animals.

Someone may say: If the acts of animals are sagacious, why are they not all alike? If reason is a cause of reflecting here, why are not all men equal in reflection, whereas the reflection of each one of them is different from that of the other? We reply: We must understand that the difference of life and minds is due to the difference of the motions of life and mind, and therefore there are different animals and different minds, though some are clearer and more obvious than others. I say that the mind and the life is clearer and more obvious in some of them, and more obscure in others of them: indeed we say that in some of them it is more brilliant and luminous than in others. For some minds are near to the first minds and are therefore more luminous than others. Some are secondary to them, and some tertiary. Therefore some of the minds here are divine, some rational, while some are irrational because of their remoteness from those noble minds. Now there the creature that we here call irrational is rational, and the creature that is mindless here has a mind there. For the first mind which the horse has is a mind, and therefore the horse is a mind. It is by reason of the mind of the horse that he is a horse; it is not possible that he who cogitates about the horse should cogitate about man, for that is absurd in the first minds; otherwise the first mind would be cogitating about something that was not mind. If that is absurd, when the first mind cogitates about something, it and the object of its cogitation are equal, so that the mind and the thing would be one thing. And how could one of the two be mind and the other – I mean the thing that is the object of cogitation – be mindless? For if that is so, mind cogitates about the object of its cogitation, while the object of its cogitation is not cogitative. This is absurd, and if this is absurd the first mind does not cogitate about anything that has not mind. No, it exercises a specific cogitation and cogitates about a specific life. Just as the individual life is not devoid of life-in-general, so the individual mind is not devoid of mind-in-general.

If this is so, we say that the mind which is in some one of the animals is not devoid of the first mind, each one of the parts of the mind being a universal mind wherein mind is particularized. So mind is the thing whose mind it is, and is potentially all things; and when it comes into actuality it becomes particular. It comes into actuality finally, and when it finally comes into actuality it becomes a horse or some other of the animals. As life moves downwards the more it becomes an ignoble base living thing, because, as the animal powers move downwards, they weaken and some of their activities are obscured. As some of their sublime activities are obscured there arises from those powers a base ignoble living thing, so that that living thing is defective and weak. When it becomes weak, the mind in it seeks an expedient for it and causes the powerful members to arise to compensate for the deficiency in its power. So some animals come to have nails, some to have claws, some to have horns and some to have tusks, according to the amount of the deficiency of the vital power in it. If this is so, we say that when the mind proceeds into this lower world and becomes greatly defective, it seeks a remedy for that deficiency, supplementing it by one of the organs it puts into it, so that it thereby becomes complete

and perfect, for every living thing must be complete and perfect by reason of the fact that it is living and intelligent.

If anyone says: Sometimes weak animals are found which have nothing wherewith to defend themselves, we reply that such animals are rare, and further we may say to him: If we put all the animals side by side, the totality of them is complete and perfect; I mean, the life and the mind in all of them will be complete and perfect, and each one of them will be complete and perfect to the extent of the completeness and perfection appropriate to it. We say that if the effect is of necessity not an absolute unity, so that it may not be like the cause, as we explained above, there is then no doubt that it is a unity composed of many things. It is impossible that it should be similar things, otherwise it would suffice that it be only one, so that the other things in it would be in vain, if one were similar to another. So it must be composed of things of different forms, and each form in it must be unique in its attributes, and each one of them must be, in one of the forms, contending for supremacy, according to the extent of the difference in the senses, but, by reason of their belonging to the living creature, one thing. After this kind will be the attributes of the first mind; I mean they will be different and not similar. If this is so, we say that the whole has beauty, consisting in its being composed of different things, and the particular has beauty, consisting in each one of the things being in the condition appropriate to it.

Just so, this world is composed of various things, and its deficiency in them is a merit. The whole is one, by the fact of its being a universe. Each one of them, be it sublime or ignoble, has some superiority according to the amount of virtue and completeness appropriate to it. If this is so, we revert and say that every natural form in this world is in that world, though there it exists in a superior and sublimer manner, for here it is attached to matter whereas there it is without matter. Every natural form here is an image of the form there which resembles it. There is a heaven there, and earth and air and water and fire, and if these forms are there, there is no doubt that there are plants there also.

Someone may say: If there are plants in the upper world then how are they there, and if there is fire and earth there, then how are they there? For there they must be either alive or dead. If they are dead, as they are here, then what need is there for them there, while if they are alive how do they live there? We reply: As for the plants, we may say that they are alive there because they are alive here too, for in plants there is an active word, imposed on life. If the material word of plants is life, then it is indubitably soul too. It follows a fortiori that this word exists in the plant in the upper world, the first plant, though it is in it in a sublimer and nobler manner because this world which is in these plants is from that word, because that word is one and universal, and all the plant-words here are attached to it. The words of the plants here are many but they are particular, and all the particular plants of this lower world are from that universal plant: whenever anyone seeks one of the particular plants he will find it in that universal plant. All these plants are necessarily a branch of that universal plant. If this is so, we say that if these plants are alive then a fortiori that plant is alive too, because that plant is the first, the true plant. Now these plants are secondary and tertiary because they are an image of that plant, and these plants live only by that plant's pouring forth the life which pours forth upon it.

As for whether the earth there is alive or dead, we shall know that when once we know what this earth is, because this is an image of that. We say that this earth has a certain life and an active word. The proof of that is its varying forms, for it grows and takes shape, and mountains sprout, as though they were earthly plants, and within the mountains are many hollows and caverns and valleys and other things. These are in them on account of the ensouled word which is in them, for that is what shapes these forms within the earth. This word is the form of the earth, which acts in the interior of the earth, as the active nature acts in the interior of the tree, for the active word in the interior of the earth resembles the active nature in the interior of the tree. The wood of the tree resembles the earth itself, and the stone which is uprooted from the earth resembles the branch which is cut from the tree. If this is so, we say that the active word in the earth, which resembles the nature of the tree, is ensouled, since it is impossible that it should be dead and perform these wonderful and tremendous activities in the earth. If it is alive it is ensouled, indubitably, and if this sensible earth, an image, is alive, then a fortiori that intelligible earth is alive also and is the first earth, while this earth is secondary to that earth and spring from it.

[137- 194; cf. Enneads 5:8; Lewis, pp. 385-395]

The things which are in the upper world are radiance because they are in the upper brilliance. Thus each one of them sees the things in its own being and in the being of its neighbor, and therefore they are all of them inside all of them, and the whole is in the whole and the one is in the whole and the whole is in the one and the one of them is the whole and the light which falls on them is infinite and therefore each one of them is immense, for the great among them is immense and the small is immense. For the sun which is there is the totality of the stars and every star of them is a sun too, although in some of them the sun predominates and they are called 'sun,' while over some of them the star predominates and they are called 'star.' Each one of them is to be seen in his neighbor, and all of them are seen in one, and the one is seen in all of them.

There is a motion there, though it is a pure absolute motion, for it does not begin with anything and end in anything, nor is it other than the mover; indeed it is the mover. There is rest there, pure and absolute, and that rest is not the result of a motion nor is it mixed with motion. There is beauty there, pure and absolute, because it is not carried in anything which is not beautiful, otherwise it would be very ugly. Every one of the things there is firmly fixed, standing on an earth which is not strange, for every one of them is firmly fixed, standing in the thing which is itself and like it in substance, though it surpasses it in rank. The thing is nothing but the place it is in, for the subject is mind and the predicate is mind too. The analogy of that is this sky, which falls under sense-perception, for it is luminous and brilliant, its brilliance being due to the stars in it, but, although they are brilliant, each one of them is in a different place from his neighbor in the sky, each one of them being merely a part, and not a whole like the things in the spiritual sky. If each part of them is a part and a whole, then when you see the part you have seen the whole, and when you see the whole you have seen the part, for the act of imagining one of the two falls on the one part, while the sight of it falls on the whole, because of its sharpness and speed. He who has sight like the sight of Lynceus sees what is in the interior of the earth. It is said in certain parables and enigmas that Lynceus was

keen of sight and used to see what was in the interior of the earth. The author of the enigma wished to describe the sight of the spiritual world and to tell us that the sight of the people of that world is keen and swift, nothing of what is there escaping it.

The vision of that world and its contents is not wearisome, nor does the beholder grow satiated with beholding it so that he deviates from it by motion, because there one does not grow too weary to look, so as to need rest for the power of beholding it to return. The beholder there does not behold one of the things and find it good and take delight in it, but beholds them all, with one look, and finds them good and takes delight. Things there do not cease or fail, nor do they tire the beholder of them, nor does his desire for them cease. For when one's desire for a thing ceases, one thinks little of it and shuns the quest for it and flees from beholding it. But the longer the beholder of all those things looks at them, the greater is his wonder at them and his desire for them, so he looks at them endlessly. The reason why one is not satiated with looking at them, and does not tire of them, is that the substance of vision is drawn toward them and follows them and does not depart from them, nor do they change from their beauty; indeed the more one looks at them, the greater grows their beauty and loveliness in one's eyes.

Life there involves no fatigue or toil, because it is a pure and sweet life, and the thing possessed of the surpassing life is not fatigued and pain does not come upon it, since it has been perfect ever since it was originated free from imperfection. Therefore it does not need toil or fatigue. That wisdom was originated from the first wisdom, and the first substance is from the wisdom, not that the substance was first and then came the wisdom, but the substance is the wisdom and the first essence is the substance and the substance is the wisdom; not that there is substance and then wisdom, as happens in the secondary substances; no, the essence and the substance and the wisdom are one thing and that wisdom is therefore more extensive than every wisdom, being the wisdom of wisdoms. Now the wisdom that is in the mind is simultaneous with the mind. I mean that first the mind is seen and then its wisdom is seen, as is said of Jupiter: His retribution is simultaneous with his being, and therefore he is mentioned first and then his retribution is mentioned. The heavenly and the earthly things are images and pictures of the things in the upper world, and therefore what is there is a wonderful sight seen only by the lucky and the fortunate, they being those who strive to behold that world. Who can see and really know the magnitude and power of the first wisdom? For it is a wisdom containing all things and a power that originated all things. All things are in it and all things are following, because it is the cause of the intelligible and the sensible things, although it originated the intelligible things directly, and originated the sensible things through the medium of the intelligibles.

All things are traced back to it because it is the cause of causes and the wisdom of wisdoms, as we have often said. If the first wisdom is the cause of causes then every act its effect performs may be ascribed to it also, in a more elevated and superior way. How noble is the upper world and the things in it – and nobler than they is the nobility of the wisdom which originated them, because it is the greatest nobility of all. None can look on that world save the man whose intelligence has submerged his senses, and who is known only as being mind alone. He is the man who has accustomed himself to recognize things by the vision of the mind, not by logic and analogy.

But our souls are not content to behold the beauty and splendor of that ideal world, because sense-perception has won the victory over us and we regard as true only

corporeal things. We therefore think that the sciences are but theorems derived from premises, and that there can be no knowledge save by the laying-down of premises and the eliciting of conclusions from them, but that is not the case in all sciences here, for the knowledge of the first pure manifest principles is obtained without laying down premises, because they are the premises from which conclusions are elicited.

Now if one of the sciences in this world is achieved by itself, without anything else, then a fortiori the sublime sciences and the heavenly theorems do not need premises conducing to the apprehension of the truth; no, the truth there is achieved without any error or falsehood at all, because they are without intermediary, as we have said, for these two fall only on an intermediate thing. Further, no strange thing or accident contaminates it in the way that accidental things contaminate the sciences here, so that they are not apprehended accurately or truly.

If anyone has doubts about that world and that it is after this description we have given, we here abandon him and his opinion so as not to occupy ourselves with disputing with him and so to abandon the thread of our discourse on the description of the realities and the truth of things. We return to where we were, the description of the sciences in that world and how they come about, and we say that Plato saw that world with the vision of the mind, and described it and mentioned the knowledge existing there, and said that knowledge there is not a thing in a thing. He did not describe how that comes about, but deliberately omitted the description of it, wishing us to seek and investigate that in our discourse, so that he might perceive who among us was capable of that. We shall describe the condition of the world there, and make this the starting-point of our words.

We say that everything that is made, be it artificial or natural, comes about through a certain wisdom. The beginning of every art is the wisdom in fashioning things, and also wisdom indubitably possesses arts. If this is as we describe, we revert and say that all arts are from a certain wisdom. The artist too goes back to the natural wisdom, for he imitates and models himself on nature. The natural wisdom is not compounded of things but is all one thing; it is not one compounded of many things, but grows from the one to the many. If anyone makes this natural wisdom belong to the first wisdom, that is enough for him; he does not need to proceed to any other wisdom, because in that case it is not from another higher wisdom, nor is it anything else.

If anyone makes the power, which produces art, belong to nature, and makes nature itself the beginning of this power, we say: Whence is this natural power? – for it must be either from itself or from something else. If this power is from nature itself, we stop and do not proceed to anything else. If they deny that and say: The power of nature originates from mind, we reply: If mind begets the wisdom, then the wisdom which is in mind must be either from something else higher than it or from mind itself. If they say: Mind begot the wisdom from itself, we reply: It is not possible; the mind is not like that, because it is an essence and then a wisdom from the first wisdom; it is but an attribute in it, not a substance. If this is so, we say that the true wisdom is a substance and the true substance is a wisdom. Every true wisdom originated from that first substance and every true substance originated from that true wisdom. Therefore every substance in which there is no wisdom is not a true substance, but although it is not a substance, since it originated from the first wisdom it is substance in the broad sense. We say that no one must suppose that some of the things in that world are more exalted than others in substance nor that some are of nobler form and more beautiful than others: no, the forms

of all the things there are beautiful and noble, being like the forms that one imagines to be in the soul of the skilful craftsman. Their forms are not like forms drawn on a wall but are forms in essences; therefore the ancients called the likeness, that is, the forms of which Plato spoke, 'entities and substances.'

We say that the sages of Egypt had seen, by the subtlety of their imagination, this intelligible world and the forms in it, and knew them accurately, either by an acquired knowledge or by an innate quality and a natural knowledge. The proof of that is that when they wished to describe anything they exhibited it with a wisdom accurate and sublime. For they used not to put it in writing in a book composed according to the usage we see in books, nor did they employ propositions and expressions or sounds and speech to express the opinions and sentiments, which they had in mind, to whom they wished, but used to inscribe them on stones or some of the bodies so as to make them into images. For when they wished to describe one of the sciences they would inscribe an image for it and set it up for a sign to men, and so they used to do in all the sciences and the arts; I mean that they used to inscribe for every thing an image, with a perfect wisdom and a surpassing art, and set up those images in their temples, so as to be for them like speaking books and letters that might be read. After this fashion were their books, in which they recorded their sentiments and by which they described things. They did that because they wanted to teach us that every science and every wisdom and every thing has an intellectual image and intellectual form with no matter or bearer: indeed, they were all originated at once, without reflection or thought, because their originator was one and simple, originating the simple things at once, merely by the fact of his being, not by any other of the ways of the mind.

Also, from those patterns and images they used to make other images, inferior to them in purity and beauty, and they did that because they wanted to teach us that these base sensory images are but images of those noble intellectual images. How good it is that they should teach us, and how right their action. If anyone were to think and reflect for a long time about the causes for which they did that, and how they attained those causes, he would wonder at them and praise them and the rightness of their views. If these people are worthy of praise because they modeled the intellectual things, and told us of the causes whereby they attained the sublime things of the mind, then modeled them in rough bodies, and set up images as signs, as though they were books which could be read and understood, then a fortiori we should admire the first wisdom which originates substances in the extreme of perfection without reflection about the causes and how each thing that is originated from them must be perfect and beautiful, because they are at the extreme of wisdom and virtue and beauty, by means of being, alone. It was by being that the Creator originated things and made them perfect and beautiful without reflection or investigation of the causes of beauty and purity. The things which one makes by means of reflection and investigation of the causes of purity and beauty will not be pure and beautiful like the things which come from the First Maker without reflection or investigation of the causes of existence and purity and beauty.

Who will not wonder at the power of that noble and sublime substance, that it originated things without reflection or investigation of their causes but originated them by the mere fact of its being? Its being is the cause of causes and therefore its being has no need, in originating things, of investigating their causes, or of cunning in bringing them well into existence and perfection, because it is the cause of causes, as we said above,

being self-sufficient without need of any cause or contemplation or investigation. We are going to cite an example supporting our description, for this statement of ours.

We say that the accounts of the ancients are unanimous, that this universe did not come into being by its own act or by chance, but came from a skillful and surpassing craftsman. But we must investigate his fashioning of this universe: whether the craftsman first reflected, when he wished to fashion it and thought within himself and first he must create an earth standing in the middle of the universe, then after that water, to be above the earth, then create air and put it above the water, then create fire and put it above the air, then create a heaven and put it above the fire, surrounding all things, then create animals with various forms suited to each creature of them, and make their members, internal and external, following the description they follow, suited to their functions; so he formed the things in his mind and reflected over the perfection of this knowledge, then began creating the works of creation one by one, in the way he previously reflected and thought.

No one must imagine that this description applied to the wise Creator, for that is absurd and impossible and inappropriate to that perfect, surpassing and noble substance. It is impossible for us to say that the Creator first reflected over how to originate things and then after that originated them, for the things over which he reflected must be either external to him or internal to him. If they are external to him then they existed before he originated them, and if they are internal to him they are either other than he or identical with him, in which case he does not need reflection in creating the things because he is the things by the fact of his being the cause of them. If they are other than he then he is assumed to be compound, not simple, and this is absurd.

We say that no one can say that the Creator first reflects about things and then originates them, for it is he that originated reflection, so how can he enlist its aid in the origination of anything when it does not yet exist? This is absurd. We say that he is reflection, and reflection does not reflect too: for it would then follow that that reflection reflects, and so ad infinitum, which is absurd. Now it is clear and confirmed how right they are who say that the Creator originated things without reflection. We say that when craftsmen wish to fashion a thing they reflect on that thing and copy what they see and contemplate within themselves. Or they cast their eyes on one of the external things and model their works on that thing. When they work they work with their hands and other instruments, whereas then the Creator wishes to make something, he does not envisage patterns within himself, nor does he imitate in his workmanship any workmanship external to him, because before he originated the things there was nothing. Nor does he envisage patterns within his being, for his being is the pattern of everything and the pattern does not envisage patterns. He does not need any instrument in the origination of things because he is the cause of instruments, it being he that originates them, and in what he originated he needs nothing of his origination.

Now that the unsoundness and impossibility of this doctrine are made plain, we say that there is, between him and his creation, no intermediate thing on which he reflects and the help of which he seeks, but that he originates things by the mere fact of his being. The first thing he originated was a form which drew light from him and appeared before all things, almost resembling him in the greatness of its power and light and extent. Then he originated the rest of things through the medium of that form, as if it were fulfilling his will in the originating of the rest of things, this form being the upper world; I mean, the

minds and souls. Then there came into existence from that upper world the lower world and the sensible things within it. Everything in this world is in that world, though there it is pure and unalloyed, mixed with no foreign thing; if this world is mixed it is not pure and unalloyed, for it divides and combines in a form from beginning to end. For matter first assumes a universal form, then it takes the form of the elements, then it takes from that form other forms, then after that it takes forms after forms, and therefore it is impossible for anyone to see matter, because it wears many forms and is concealed beneath them, none of the senses attaining it.