

Hymn to King Helios

Introduction to Oration IV

In the fourth century A.D. poetry was practically extinct, and hymns to the gods were almost always written in prose. Julian's Fourth Oration is, according to the definition of the rhetorician Menander, a φυσικὸς ὕμνος, a hymn that describes the physical qualities of a god. Julian was an uncritical disciple of the later Neo-Platonic school, and apparently reproduces without any important modification the doctrines of its chief representative, the Syrian Iamblichus, with whom begins the decadence of Neo-Platonism as a philosophy. Oriental superstition took the place of the severe spiritualism of Plotinus and his followers, and a philosophy that had been from the first markedly religious, is now expounded by theurgists and the devotees of strange Oriental cults. It is Mithras the Persian sun-god, rather than Apollo, whom Julian identifies with his "intellectual god" Helios, and Apollo plays a minor part among his manifestations. Mithras worship, which Tertullian called "a Satanic plagiarism of Christianity," because in certain of its rites it recalled the sacraments of the Christian church, first made its appearance among the Romans in the first century B.C.^[1] Less hospitably received at first than the cults of Isis and Serapis and the Great Mother of Pessinus, it gradually overpowered them and finally dominated the whole Roman Empire, though it was never welcomed by the Hellenes. For the Romans it supplied the ideals of purity, devotion and self-control which the other cults had lacked. The worshippers of Mithras were taught to contend against the powers of evil, submitted themselves to a severe moral discipline, and their reward after death was to become as pure as the gods to whom they ascend. "If Christianity," says Renan, "had been checked in its growth by some deadly disease, the world would have become Mithraic." Julian, like the Emperor Commodus in the second century, had no doubt been initiated into the Mysteries of Mithras, and the severe discipline of the cult was profoundly attractive to one who had been estranged by early associations from the very similar teaching of the Christians.

Julian followed Plotinus and Iamblichus in making the supreme principle the One (ἓν) or the Good (τὸ ἀγαθόν) which presides over the intelligible world (νοητὸς κόσμος), where rule Plato's Ideas, now called the intelligible gods (νοητὸι θεοί). Iamblichus had imported into the Neo-Platonic system the intermediary world of intellectual gods (noeroi theoi). On them Helios-Mithras, their supreme god and centre, bestows the intelligence and creative and unifying forces that he has received from his transcendental counterpart among the intelligible gods. The third member of the triad is the world of sense-perception governed by the sun, the visible counterpart of Helios. What distinguishes Julian's triad^[2] from other Neo-Platonic triads is this hierarchy of three suns in the three worlds: and further, the importance that he gives to the intermediary world, the abode of Helios-Mithras. He pays little attention to the remote intelligible world and devotes his exposition to Helios, the intellectual god, and the visible sun. Helios is the link that relates the three members of the triad. His "middleness" (μεσότης) is not only local: he is in every possible sense the mediator and unifier. μεσότης is the Aristotelian word for the "mean," but there is no evidence that it was used with the active sense of mediation before Julian. A passage in Plutarch however seems to indicate that the "middleness" of the sun was a Persian doctrine: "The principle of good most nearly resembles light, and the principle of evil darkness, and between both is Mithras; therefore the Persians called Mithras the Mediator (μεσίτης).^[3] Naville has pointed out the resemblance between the sun as mediator and the Christian Logos, which Julian may have had in mind. Julian's system results in a practically monotheistic worship of Helios, and here he probably parts company with Iamblichus.

But though deeply influenced by Mithraism, Julian was attempting to revive the pagan gods, and if he could not, in the fourth century, restore the ancient faith in the gods of Homer he nevertheless could not omit from his creed the numerous deities whose temples and altars he had rebuilt. Here he took advantage of the identification of Greek, Roman, and Oriental deities which had been going on for centuries. The old names,

endeared by the associations of literature, could be retained without endangering the supremacy of Helios. Julian identifies Zeus, Helios, Hades, Oceanus and the Egyptian Serapis. But the omnipotent Zeus of Greek mythology is now a creative force which works with Helios and has no separate existence. Tradition had made Athene the child of Zeus, but Julian regards her as the manifestation of the intelligent forethought of Helios. Dionysus is the vehicle of his fairest thoughts, and Aphrodite a principle that emanates from him. He contrives that all the more important gods of Greece, Egypt and Persia shall play their parts as manifestations of Helios. The lesser gods are mediating demons as well as forces. His aim was to provide the Hellenic counterpart of the positive revealed religion of Christianity. Hence his insistence on the inspiration of Homer, Hesiod, and Plato, and his statement^[4] that the allegorical interpretations of the mysteries are not mere hypotheses, whereas the doctrines of the astronomers deserve no higher title. The Oration is dedicated to his friend and comrade in arms Sallust who is probably identical with the Neo-Platonic philosopher, of the school of Iamblichus, who wrote about 360 the treatise *On the Gods and the World*. Cumont calls this "the official catechism of the Pagan empire," and Wilamowitz regards it as the positive complement of Julian's pamphlet *Against the Christians*. Julian's Eighth Oration is a discourse of consolation, παραμυθητικὸς, for the departure of Sallust when Constantius recalled him from Gaul in 358.

Hymn to king Helios, dedicated to Sallust

What I am now about to say I consider to be of the greatest importance for all things "That breathe and move upon the earth"^[5] and have a share in existence and a reasoning soul^[6] and intelligence, but above all others it is of importance to myself. For I am a follower of King Helios. And of this fact I possess within me, known to myself alone, proofs more certain than I can give.^[7] But this at least I am permitted to say without sacrilege, that from my childhood an extraordinary longing for the rays of the god penetrated deep into my soul; and from my earliest years my mind was so completely swayed by the light that illumines the heavens that not only did I desire to gaze intently at the sun, but whenever I walked abroad in the night season, when the firmament was clear and cloudless, I abandoned all else without exception and gave myself up to the beauties of the heavens; nor did I understand what anyone might say to me, nor heed what I was doing myself. I was considered to be over-curious about these matters and to pay too much attention to them, and people went so far as to regard me as an astrologer when my beard had only just begun to grow. **[131]** And yet, I call heaven to witness, never had a book on this subject come into my hands; nor did I as yet even know what that science was. But why do I mention this, when I have more important things to tell, if I should relate how, in those days, I thought about the gods? However let that darkness^[8] be buried in oblivion. But let what I have said bear witness to this fact, that the heavenly light shone all about me, and that it roused and urged me on to its contemplation, so that even then I recognised of myself that the movement of the moon was in the opposite direction to the universe, though as yet I had met no one of those who are wise in these matters. Now for my part I envy the good fortune of any man to whom the god has granted to inherit a body built of the seed of holy and inspired ancestors, so that he can unlock the treasures of wisdom; nor do I despise that lot with which I was myself endowed by the god Helios, that I should be born of a house that rules and governs the world in my time; but further, I regard this god, if we may believe the wise, as the common father of all mankind.^[9] For it is said with truth that man and the sun together beget man,^[10] and that the god sows this earth with souls which proceed not from himself alone but from the other gods also;^[11] and for what purpose, the souls reveal by the kind of lives that they select. Now far the best thing is when anyone has the fortune to have inherited the service of the god, even before the third generation, from a long and unbroken line of ancestors; yet it is not a thing to be disparaged when anyone, recognising that he is by nature intended to be the servant of Helios, either alone of all men, or in company with but few, devotes himself to the service of his master.

Come then, let me celebrate, as best I may, his festival which the Imperial city^[12] adorns with annual sacrifices.^[13] Now it is hard, as I well know, merely to comprehend how great is the Invisible, if one judge by his visible self,^[14] **[132]** and to tell it is perhaps impossible, even though one should consent to fall short of what is his due. For well I know that no one in the world could attain to a description that would be

worthy of him, and not to fail of a certain measure of success in his praises is the greatest height to which human beings can attain in the power of utterance. But as for me, may Hermes, the god of eloquence,^[15] stand by my side to aid me, and the Muses also and Apollo,^[16] the leader of the Muses, since he too has oratory for his province, and may they grant that I utter only what the gods approve that men should say and believe about them. What, then, shall be the manner of my praise? Or is it not evident that if I describe his substance and his origin, and his powers and energies, both visible and invisible, and the gift of blessings which he bestows throughout all the worlds,^[17] I shall compose an encomium not wholly displeasing to the god? With these, then, let me begin.

This divine and wholly beautiful universe, from the highest vault of heaven to the lowest limit of the earth, is held together by the continuous providence of the god, has existed from eternity ungenerated, is imperishable for all time to come, and is guarded immediately by nothing else than the Fifth Substance^[18] whose culmination is the beams of the sun;^[19] and in the second and higher degree, so to speak, by the intelligible world; but in a still loftier sense it is guarded by the King of the whole universe, who is the centre of all things that exist. He, therefore, whether it is right to call him the Supra-Intelligible, or the Idea of Being, and by Being I mean the whole intelligible region, or the One, since the One seems somehow to be prior to all the rest, or, to use Plato's name for him, the Good; at any rate this uncompounded cause of the whole reveals to all existence beauty, and perfection, and oneness, and irresistible power; and in virtue of the primal creative substance that abides in it, produced, as middle among the middle and intellectual, creative causes, **[133]** Helios the most mighty god, proceeding from itself and in all things like unto itself. Even so the divine Plato believed, when he writes, "Therefore (said I) when I spoke of this, understand that I meant the offspring of the Good which the Good begat in his own likeness, and that what the Good is in relation to pure reason and its objects in the intelligible world, such is the sun in the visible world in relation to sight and its objects."^[20] Accordingly his light has the same relation to the visible world as truth has to the intelligible world. And he himself as a whole, since he is the son of what is first and greatest, namely, the Idea of the Good, and subsists from eternity in the region of its abiding substance, has received also the dominion among the intellectual gods, and himself dispenses to the intellectual gods those things of which the Good is the cause for the intelligible gods. Now the Good is, I suppose, the cause for the intelligible gods of beauty, existence, perfection, and oneness, connecting these and illuminating them with a power that works for good. These accordingly Helios bestows on the intellectual gods also, since he has been appointed by the Good to rule and govern them, even though they came forth and came into being together with him, and this was, I suppose, in order that the cause which resembles the Good may guide the intellectual gods to blessings for them all, and may regulate all things according to pure reason.

But this visible disc also, third^[21] in rank, is clearly, for the objects of sense-perception the cause of preservation, and this visible Helios^[22] is the cause for the visible gods^[23] of just as many blessings as we said mighty Helios bestows on the intellectual gods. And of this there are clear proofs for one who studies the unseen world in the light of things seen.^[24] For in the first place, is not light itself a sort of incorporeal and divine form of the transparent in a state of activity? And as for the transparent itself, whatever it is, since it is the underlying basis, so to speak, of all the elements, and is a form peculiarly belonging to them, it is not like the corporeal or compounded, nor does it admit qualities peculiar to corporeal substance.^[25] You will not therefore say that heat is a property of the transparent,^[26] or its opposite cold, nor will you assign to it hardness or softness or any other of the various, attributes connected with touch or taste or smell; **[134]** but a nature of this sort is obvious to sight alone, since it is brought into activity by light. And light is a form of this substance, so to speak, which is the substratum of and coextensive with the heavenly bodies. And of light, itself incorporeal, the culmination and flower, so to speak, is the sun's rays. Now the doctrine of the Phoenicians, who were wise and learned in sacred lore, declared that the rays of light everywhere diffused are the undefiled incarnation of pure mind. And in harmony with this is our theory, seeing that light itself is incorporeal, if one should regard its fountainhead, not as corporeal, but as the undefiled activity of mind^[27] pouring light into its own abode: and this is assigned to the middle of the whole firmament, whence it sheds its rays and fills the heavenly spheres with vigour of every kind and illumines all things with light divine and undefiled. Now the activities proceeding from it and exercised among the gods have been, in some

measure at least, described by me a little earlier^[28] and will shortly be further spoken of. But all that we see merely with the sight at first is a name only, deprived of activity, unless we add thereto the guidance and aid of light. For what, speaking generally, could be seen, were it not first brought into touch with light in order that, I suppose, it may receive a form, as matter is brought under the hand of a craftsman? And indeed molten gold in the rough is simply gold, and not yet a statue or an image, until the craftsman give it its proper shape. So too all the objects of sight, unless they are brought under the eyes of the beholder together with light, are altogether deprived of visibility. Accordingly by giving the power of sight to those who see, and the power of being seen to the objects of sight, it brings to perfection, by means of a single activity, two faculties, namely vision and visibility.^[29] And in forms and substance are expressed its perfecting powers.

However, this is perhaps somewhat subtle; but as for that guide whom we all follow, ignorant and unlearned, philosophers and rhetoricians, what power in the universe has this god when he rises and sets? Night and day he creates, and before our eyes changes and sways the universe. **[135]** But to which of the other heavenly bodies does this power belong? How then can we now fail to believe, in view of this, in respect also to things more divine, that the invisible and divine tribes of intellectual gods above the heavens are filled with power that works for good by him, even by him to whom the whole band of the heavenly bodies yields place, and whom all generated things follow, piloted by his providence?^[30] For that the planets dance about him as their king, in certain intervals, fixed in relation to him, and revolve in a circle with perfect accord, making certain halts, and pursuing to and fro their orbit,^[31] as those who are learned in the study of the spheres call their visible motions; and that the light of the moon waxes and wanes varying in proportion to its distance from the sun, is, I think, clear to all. Then is it not natural that we should suppose that the more venerable ordering of bodies among the intellectual gods corresponds to this arrangement?

Let us therefore comprehend, out of all his functions, first his power to perfect, from the fact that he makes visible the objects of sight in the universe, for through his light he perfects them; secondly, his creative and generative power^[32] from the changes wrought by him in the universe; thirdly, his power to link together all things into one whole, from the harmony of his motions towards one and the same goal; fourthly, his middle station we can comprehend from himself, who is midmost; and fifthly, the fact that he is established as king among the intellectual gods, from his middle station among the planets. Now if we see that these powers, or powers of similar importance, belong to any one of the other visible deities, let us not assign to Helios leadership among the gods. But if he has nothing in common with those other gods except his beneficent energy, and of this too he gives them all a share, then let us call to witness the priests of Cyprus who set up common altars to Helios and Zeus; but even before them let us summon as witness Apollo,^[33] who sits in council with our god. **[136]** For this god declares: "Zeus, Hades, Helios Serapis, three gods in one godhead!"^[34] Let us then assume that, among the intellectual gods, Helios and Zeus have a joint or rather a single sovereignty. Hence I think that with reason Plato called Hades a wise god.^[35] And we call this same god Hades Serapis also, namely the Unseen^[36] and Intellectual, to whom Plato^[37] says the souls of those who have lived most righteously and justly mount upwards. For let no one conceive of him as the god whom the legends teach us to shudder at, but as the mild and placable, since he completely frees our souls from generation: and the souls that he has thus freed he does not nail to other bodies,^[38] punishing them and exacting penalties, but he carries aloft and lifts up our souls to the intelligible world. And that this doctrine is not wholly new, but that Homer and Hesiod the most venerable of the poets held it before us, whether this was their own view or, like seers, they were divinely inspired with a sacred frenzy for the truth, is evident from the following. Hesiod, in tracing his genealogy, said^[39] that Helios is the son of Hyperion and Thea, intimating thereby that he is the true son of him who is above all things. For who else could Hyperion^[40] be? And is not Thea herself, in another fashion, said to be most divine of beings? But as for a union or marriage, let us not conceive of such a thing, since that is the incredible and paradoxical trifling of the poetic Muse. But let us believe that his father and sire was the most divine and supreme being; and who else could have this nature save him who transcends all things, the central point and goal of all things that exist? And Homer calls him Hyperion after his father^[41] and shows his unconditioned nature, superior to all constraint. For Zeus, as Homer says, since he is lord of all constrains the other gods. And when, in the course of the myth,^[42] Helios says that on account of the impiety of the comrades of Odysseus^[43] he will forsake

Olympus, [137] Zeus no longer says, "Then with very earth would I draw you up and the sea withal,"^[44] nor does he threaten him with fetters or violence, but he says that he will inflict punishment on the guilty and bids Helios go on shining among the gods. Does he not thereby declare that besides being unconditioned, Helios has also the power to perfect? For why do the gods need him unless by sending his light, himself invisible, on their substance and existence, he fulfils for them the blessings' of which I spoke? For when Homer says that "Ox-eyed Hera, the queen, sent unwearied Helios to go, all unwilling, to the streams of Oceanus,"^[45] he means that, by reason of a heavy mist, it was thought to be night before the proper time. And this mist is surely the goddess herself, and in another place also in the poem he says, "Hera spread before them a thick mist."^[46] But let us leave the stories of the poets alone. For along with what is inspired they contain much also that is merely human. And let me now relate what the god himself seems to teach us, both about himself and the other gods.

The region of the earth contains being in a state of becoming. Then who endows it with imperishability? Is it not he^[47] who keeps all together by means of definite limits? For that the nature of being should be unlimited was not possible, since it is neither uncreated nor self-subsistent. And if from being something were generated absolutely without ceasing and nothing were resolved back into it, the substance of things generated would fail. Accordingly this god, moving in due measure, raises up and stimulates this substance when he approaches it, and when he departs to a distance he diminishes and destroys it; or rather he himself continually revivifies it by giving it movement and flooding it with life. [138] And his departure and turning in the her direction is the cause of decay for things that perish. Ever does his gift of blessings descend evenly upon the earth. For now one country now another receives them, to the end that becoming may not cease nor the god ever benefit less or more than is his custom this changeful world. For sameness, as of being so also of activity, exists among the gods, and above all the others in the case of the King of the All, Helios; and he also makes the simplest movement of all the heavenly bodies^[48] that travel in a direction opposite to the whole. In fact this is the very thing that the celebrated Aristotle makes a proof of his superiority, compared with the others. Nevertheless from the other intellectual gods also, forces clearly discernible descend to this world. And now what does this mean? Are we not excluding the others when we assert that the leadership has been assigned to Helios? Nay, far rather do I think it right from the visible to have faith about the invisible.^[49] For even as this god is seen to complete and to adapt to himself and to the universe the powers that are bestowed on the earth from the other gods for all things, after the same fashion we must believe that among the invisible gods also there is intercourse with one another; his mode of intercourse being that of a leader, while the modes of intercourse of the others are at the same time in harmony with his. For since we said that the god is established midmost among the midmost intellectual gods, may King Helios himself grant to us to tell what is the nature of that middleness among things of which we must regard him as the middle.

Now "middleness"^[50] we define not as that mean which in opposites is seen to be equally remote from the extremes, as, for instance, in colours, tawny or dusky, and warm in the case of hot and cold, and the like, but that which unifies and links together what is separate; for instance the sort of thing that Empedocles^[51] means by Harmony when from it he altogether eliminates Strife. And now what does Helios link together, and of what is he the middle? I assert then that he is midway between the visible gods who surround the universe and the immaterial and intelligible gods who surround the Good – [139] for the intelligible and divine substance is as it were multiplied without external influence and without addition. For that the intellectual and wholly beautiful substance of King Helios is middle in the sense of being unmixed with extremes, complete in itself, and distinct from the whole number of the gods, visible and invisible, both those perceptible by sense and those which are intelligible only, I have already declared, and also in what sense we must conceive of his middleness. But if I must also describe these things one by one, in order that we may discern with our intelligence how his intermediary nature, in its various forms, is related both to the highest and the lowest, even though it is not easy to recount it all, yet let me try to say what can be said.

Wholly one is the intelligible world, pre-existent from all time, and it combines all things together in the One. Again is not our whole world also one complete living organism, wholly throughout the whole of it full of soul and intelligence, "perfect, with all its parts perfect"?^[52] Midway then between this uniform two-fold perfection — I mean that one kind of unity holds together in one all that exists in the intelligible world, while the other kind of unity unites in the visible world all things into one and the same perfect nature — between these, I say, is the uniform perfection of King Helios, established among the intellectual gods. There is, however, next in order, a sort of binding force in the intelligible world of the gods, which orders all things into one. Again is there not visible in the heavens also, travelling in its orbit, the nature of the Fifth Substance,^[53] which links and compresses^[54] together all the parts, holding together things that by nature are prone to scatter and to fall away from one another? These existences, therefore, which are two causes of connection, one in the intelligible world, while the other appears in the world of sense-perception, King Helios combines into one, imitating the synthetic power of the former among the intellectual gods, seeing that he proceeds from it, and subsisting prior to the latter which is seen in the visible world. Then must not the unconditioned also, which exists primarily in the intelligible world, **[140]** and finally among the visible bodies in the heavens, possess midway between these two the unconditioned substance of King Helios, and from that primary creative substance do not the rays of his light, illumining all things, descend to the visible world? Again, to take another point of view, the creator of the whole is one, but many are the creative gods^[55] who revolve in the heavens. Midmost therefore of these also we must place the creative activity which descends into the world from Helios. But also the power of generating life is abundant and overflowing in the intelligible world; and our world also appears to be full of generative life. It is therefore evident that the life-generating power of King Helios also is midway between both the worlds: and the phenomena of our world also bear witness to this. For some forms he perfects, others he makes, or adorns, or wakes to life, and there is no single thing which, apart from the creative power derived from Helios, can come to light and to birth. And further, besides this, if we should comprehend the pure and undefiled and immaterial substance^[56] among the intelligible gods — to which nothing external is added, nor has any alien thing a place therein, but it is filled with its own unstained purity — and if we should comprehend also the pure and unmixed nature of unstained and divine substance, whose elements are wholly unmixed, and which, in the visible universe, surrounds the substance that revolves,^[57] here also we should discover the radiant and stainless substance of King Helios, midway between the two; that is to say, midway between the immaterial purity that exists among the intelligible gods, and that perfect purity, unstained and free from birth and death, that exists in the world which we can perceive. And the greatest proof of this is that not even the light which comes down nearest to the earth from the sun is mixed with anything, nor does it admit dirt and defilement, but remains wholly pure and without stain and free from external influences among all existing things.

But we must go on to consider the immaterial and intelligible forms,^[58] and also those visible forms which are united with matter or the substratum. **[141]** Here again, the intellectual will be found to be midmost among the forms that surround mighty Helios, by which forms in their turn the material forms are aided; for they never could have existed or been preserved, had they not been brought, by his aid, into connection with being. For consider: is not he the cause of the separation of the forms, and of the combination of matter, in that he not only permits us to comprehend his very self, but also to behold him with our eyes? For the distribution of his rays over the whole universe, and the unifying power of his light, prove him to be the master workman who gives an individual existence to everything that is created.

Now though there are many more blessings connected with the substance of the god and apparent to us, which show that he is midway between the intelligible and the mundane gods^[59] let us proceed to his last visible province. His first province then in the last of the worlds is, as though by way of a pattern, to give form and personality to the sun's angels.^[60] Next is his province of generating the world of sense-perception, of which the more honourable part contains the cause of the heavens and the heavenly bodies, while the inferior part guides this our world of becoming, and from eternity contains in itself the uncreated cause of

that world. Now to describe all the properties of the substance of this god, even though the god himself should grant one to comprehend them, is impossible, seeing that even to grasp them all with the mind is, in my opinion, beyond our power.

But since I have already described many of them, I must set a seal, as it were, on this discourse, now that I am about to pass to other subjects that demand no less investigation. What then that seal is, and what is the knowledge of the god's substance that embraces all these questions, and as it were sums them up under one head, may he himself suggest to my mind, since I desire to describe in a brief summary both the cause from which he proceeded, and his own nature, and those blessings with which he fills the visible world. This then we must declare, that King Helios is One and proceeds from one god, [142] even from the intelligible world which is itself One; and that he is midmost of the intellectual gods, stationed in their midst by every kind of mediateness that is harmonious and friendly, and that joins what is sundered; and that he brings together into one the last and the first, having in his own person the means of completeness, of connection, of generative life and of uniform being: and that for the world which we can perceive he initiates blessings of all sorts, not only by means of the light with which he illumines it, adorning it and giving it its splendour, but also because he calls into existence, along with himself, the substance of the Sun's angels;^[61] and that finally in himself he comprehends the ungenerated cause of things generated, and further, and prior to this, the ageless and abiding cause of the life of the imperishable bodies.^[62]

Now as for what it was right to say about the substance of this god, though the greater part has been omitted, nevertheless much has been said. But since the multitude of his powers and the beauty of his activities is so great that we shall now exceed the limit of what we observed about his substance, — for it is natural that when divine things come forth into the region of the visible they should be multiplied, in virtue of the superabundance of life and life-generating power in them, — consider what I have to do. For now I must strip for a plunge into this fathomless sea, though I have barely, and as best I might, taken breath, after the first part of this discourse. Venture I must, nevertheless, and putting my trust in the god endeavour to handle the theme.

We must assume that what has just been said about his substance applies equally to his powers.^[63] For it cannot be that a god's substance is one thing, and his power another, and his activity, by Zeus, a third thing besides these. For all that he wills he is, and can do, and puts into action. For he does not will what is not, nor does he lack power to do what he wills, nor does he desire to put into action what he cannot. In the case of a human being, however, this is otherwise. For his is a two-fold contending nature of soul and body compounded into one, the former divine, the latter dark and clouded. Naturally, therefore, there is a battle and a feud between them. And Aristotle also says^[64] [143] that this is why neither the pleasures nor the pains in us harmonise with one another. For he says that what is pleasant to one of the natures within us is painful to the nature which is its opposite. But among the gods there is nothing of this sort. For from their very nature what is good belongs to them, and perpetually, not intermittently. In the first place, then, all that I said when I tried to show forth his substance, I must be considered to have said about his powers and activities also. And since in such cases the argument is naturally convertible, all that I observe next in order concerning his powers and activities must be considered to apply not to his activities only, but to his substance also. For verily there are gods related to Helios and of like substance who sum up the stainless nature of this god, and though in the visible world they are plural, in him they are one. And now listen first to what they assert who look at the heavens, not like horses and cattle, or some other unreasoning and ignorant animal,^[65] but from it draw their conclusions about the unseen world. But even before this, if you please, consider his supra-mundane powers and activities, and out of a countless number, observe but a few.

First, then, of his powers is that through which he reveals the whole intellectual substance throughout as one, since he brings together its extremes. For even as in the world of sense-perception we can clearly discern air and water set between fire and earth,^[66] as the link that binds together the extremes, would one not reasonably suppose that, in the case of the cause which is separate from elements and prior to them — and though it is the principle of generation, is not itself generation — it is so ordered that, in that world also, the extreme causes which are wholly separate from elements are bound together into one through certain

modes of mediation, by King Helios, and are united about him as their centre? And the creative power of Zeus also coincides with him, by reason of which in Cyprus, as I said earlier, shrines are founded and assigned to them in common. [144] And Apollo himself also we called to witness to our statements, since it is certainly likely that he knows better than we about his own nature. For he too abides with Helios and is his colleague by reason of the singleness of his thoughts and the stability of his substance and the consistency of his activity.^[67]

But Apollo too in no case appears to separate the dividing creative function of Dionysus^[68] from Helios. And since he always subordinates it to Helios and so indicates that Dionysus^[69] is his partner on the throne, Apollo is the interpreter for us of the fairest purposes that are to be found with our god. Further Helios, since he comprehends in himself all the principles of the fairest intellectual synthesis, is himself Apollo the leader of the Muses. And since he fills the whole of our life with fair order, he begat Asclepius^[70] in the world, though even before the beginning of the world he had him by his side.

But though one should survey many other powers that belong to this god, never could one investigate them all. It is enough to have observed the following: That there is an equal and identical dominion of 1 Helios and Zeus over the separate creation which is prior to substances, in the region, that is to say, of the absolute causes which, separated from visible creation, existed prior to it; secondly we observed the singleness of his thoughts which is bound up with the imperishableness and abiding sameness that he shares with Apollo; thirdly, the dividing part of his creative function which he shares with Dionysus who controls divided substance; fourthly; we have observed the power of the leader of the Muses, revealed in fairest symmetry and blending of the intellectual; finally we comprehended that Helios, with Asclepius, fulfils the fair order of the whole of life.

So much then in respect to those powers of his that existed before the beginning of the world; and co-ordinate with these are his works over the whole visible world, in that he fills it with good gifts. For since he is the genuine son of the Good and from it has received his blessed lot in fulness of perfection, he himself distributes that blessedness to the intellectual gods, bestowing on them a beneficent and perfect nature. This then is one of his works. And a second work of the god is his most perfect distribution [145] of intelligible beauty among the intellectual and immaterial forms. For when the generative substance^[71] which is visible in our world desires to beget in the Beautiful^[72] and to bring forth offspring, it is further necessary that it should be guided by the substance that, in the region of intelligible beauty, does this very thing eternally and always and not intermittently, now fruitful now barren. For all that is beautiful in our world only at times, is beautiful always in the intelligible world. We must therefore assert that the ungenerated offspring, in beauty intelligible and eternal, guides the generative cause in the visible world; which offspring^[73] this god^[74] called into existence and keeps at his side, and to it he assigns also perfect reason. For just as through his light he gives sight to our eyes, so also among the intelligible gods through his intellectual counterpart — which he causes to shine far more brightly than his rays in our upper air — he bestows, as I believe, on all the intellectual gods the faculty of thought and of being comprehended by thought. Besides these, another marvellous activity of Helios the King of the All is that by which he endows with superior lot the nobler races — I mean angels,^[75] daemons,^[76] heroes, and those divided souls^[77] which remain in the category of model and archetype and never give themselves over to bodies. I have now described the substance of our god that is prior to the world and his powers and activities, celebrating Helios the King of the All in so far as it was possible for me to compass his praise. But since eyes, as the saying goes, are more trustworthy than hearing — although they are of course less trustworthy and weaker than the intelligence — come, let me endeavour to tell also of his visible creative function; but let first me entreat him to grant that I speak with some measure of success.

From eternity there subsisted, surrounding Helios, the visible world, and from eternity the light that encompasses the world has its fixed station, not shining intermittently, nor in different ways at different times, but always in the same manner. And if one desired to comprehend, as far as the mind may, this eternal nature from the point of view of time, one would understand most easily of how many blessings for the

world throughout eternity he is the cause, [146] even Helios he King of the All who shines without cessation. Now I am aware that the great philosopher Plato,^[78] and after him a man who, though he is later in time, is by no means inferior to him in genius — I mean Iamblichus^[79] of Chalcis, who through his writings initiated me not only into other philosophic doctrines but these also — I am aware, I say, that they employed as a hypothesis the conception of a generated world, and assumed for it, so to speak, a creation in time in order that the magnitude of the works that arise from Helios might be recognised. But apart from the fact that I fall short altogether of their ability, I must by no means be so rash; especially since the glorious hero Iamblichus thought it was not without risk to assume, even as a bare hypothesis, a temporal limit for the creation of the world. Nay rather, the god came forth from an eternal cause, or rather brought forth all things from everlasting, engendering by his divine will and with untold speed and unsurpassed power, from the invisible all things now visible in present time. And then he assigned as his own station the mid-heavens, in order that from all sides he may bestow equal blessings on the gods who came forth by his agency and in company with him; and that he may guide the seven spheres^[80] in the heavens and the eighth sphere^[81] also, yes and as I believe the ninth creation too, namely our world which revolves for ever in a continuous cycle of birth and death. For it is evident that the planets, as they dance in a circle about him, preserve as the measure of their motion a harmony between this god and their own movements such as I shall now describe; and that the whole heaven also, which adapts itself to him in all its parts, is full of gods who proceed from Helios. For this god is lord of five zones in the heavens; and when he traverses three of these he begets in those three the three Graces.^[82] And the remaining zones are the scales of mighty Necessity.^[83] [147] To the Greeks what I say is perhaps incomprehensible — as though one were obliged to say to them only what is known and familiar. Yet not even is this altogether strange to them as one might suppose. For who, then, in your opinion, are the Dioscuri,^[84] O ye most wise, ye who accept without question so many of your traditions? Do you not call them "alternate of days,"^[85] because they may not both be seen on the same day? It is obvious that by this you mean "yesterday" and "to-day." But what does this mean, in the name of those same Dioscuri? Let me apply it to some natural object, so that I may not say anything empty and senseless. But no such object could one find, however carefully one might search for it. For the theory that some have supposed to be held by the theogonists, that the two hemispheres of the universe are meant, has no meaning. For how one could call each one of the hemispheres "alternate of days" is not easy to imagine, since the increase of their light in each separate day is imperceptible. But now let us consider a question on which some may think that I am innovating. We say correctly that those persons for whom the time of the sun's course above the earth is the same in one and the same month share the same day. Consider therefore whether the expression "alternate of days" cannot be applied both to the tropics and the other, the polar, circles. But some one will object that it does not apply equally to both. For though the former are always visible, and both of them are visible at once to those who inhabit that part of the earth where shadows are cast in an opposite direction,^[86] yet in the case of the latter those who see the one do not see the other.

However, not to dwell too long on the same subject; since he causes the winter and summer solstice, Helios is, as we know, the father of the seasons; and since he never forsakes the poles, he is Oceanus, the lord of two-fold substance. My meaning here is not obscure, is it, seeing that before my time Homer said the same thing? "Oceanus who is the father of all things":^[87] yes, for mortals and for the blessed gods too, as he himself would say; and what he says is true. For there is no single thing in the whole of existence [148] that is not the offspring of the substance of Oceanus. But what has that to do with the poles? Shall I tell you? It were better indeed to keep silence;^[88] but for all that I will speak.

Some say then, even though all men are not ready to believe it, that the sun travels in the starless heavens far above the region of the fixed stars. And on this theory he will not be stationed midmost among the planets but midway between the three worlds: that is, according to the hypothesis of the mysteries, if indeed one ought to use the word "hypothesis" and not rather say "established truths," using the word "hypothesis" for the study of the heavenly bodies. For the priests of the mysteries tell us what they have been taught by the gods or mighty daemons, whereas the astronomers make plausible hypotheses from the harmony that they

observe in the visible spheres. It is proper, no doubt, to approve the astronomers as well, but where any man thinks it better to believe the priests of the mysteries, him I admire and revere, both in jest and earnest. And so much for that, as the saying is.^[89]

Now besides those whom I have mentioned, there is in the heavens a great multitude of gods who have been recognised as such by those who survey the heavens, not casually, nor like cattle.^[90] For as he divides the three spheres by four through the zodiac,^[91] which is associated with every one of the three, so he divides the zodiac also into twelve divine powers; and again he divides every one of these twelve by three, so as to make thirty-six gods in^[92] all. Hence, as I believe, there descends from above, from the heavens to us, a three-fold gift of the Graces: I mean from the spheres, for this god, by thus dividing them by four, sends to us the fourfold glory of the seasons, which express the changes of time. And indeed on our earth the Graces imitate a circle^[93] in their statues. And it is Dionysus who is the giver of the Graces, and in this very connection he is said to reign with Helios. Why should I go on to speak to you of Horus^[94] and of the other names of gods, which all belong to Helios? **[149]** For from his works men have learned to know this god, who makes the whole heavens perfect through the gift of intellectual blessings, and gives it a share of intelligible beauty; and taking the heavens as their starting-point, they have learned to know him both as a whole and his parts also, from his abundant bestowal of good gifts. For he exercises control over all movement, even to the lowest plane of the universe. And everywhere he makes all things perfect, nature and soul and everything that exists. And marshalling together this great army of the gods into a single commanding unity, he handed it over to Athene Pronoia^[95] who, as the legend says, sprang from the head of Zeus, but I say that she was sent forth from Helios whole from the whole of him, being contained within him; though I disagree with the legend only so far as I assert that she came forth not from his highest part, but whole from the whole of him. For in other respects, since I believe that Zeus is in no wise different from Helios, I agree with that ancient tradition. And in using this very phrase Athene Pronoia, I am not innovating, if I rightly understand the words: "He came to Pytho and to grey-eyed Pronoia."^[96] This proves that the ancients also thought that Athene Pronoia shared the throne of Apollo, who, as we believe, differs in no way from Helios. Indeed, did not Homer by divine inspiration — for he was, we may suppose, possessed by a god — reveal this truth, when he says often in his poems: "May I be honoured even as Athene and Apollo were honoured"^[97] — by Zeus, that is to say, who is identical with Helios? And just as King Apollo, through the singleness of his thoughts, is associated with Helios, so also we must believe that Athene^[98] has received her nature from Helios, and that she is his intelligence in perfect form: and so she binds together the gods who are assembled about Helios and brings them without confusion into unity with Helios, the King of the All: and she distributes and is the channel for stainless and pure life throughout the seven spheres, from the highest vault of the heavens as far as Selene the Moon:^[99] **[150]** for Selene is the last of the heavenly spheres which Athene fills with wisdom: and by her aid Selene beholds the intelligible which is higher than the heavens, and adorns with its forms the realm of matter that lies below her, and thus she does away with its savagery and confusion and disorder. Moreover to mankind Athene gives the blessings of wisdom and intelligence and the creative arts. And surely she dwells in the capitols of cities because, through her wisdom, she has established the community of the state. I have still to say a few words about Aphrodite, who, as the wise men among the Phoenicians affirm, and as I believe, assists Helios in his creative function. She is, in very truth, a synthesis of the heavenly gods, and in their harmony she is the spirit of love and unity.^[100] For she^[101] is very near to Helios, and when she pursues the same course as he and approaches him, she fills the skies with fair weather and gives generative power to the earth: for she herself takes thought for the continuous birth of living things. And though of that continuous birth King Helios is the primary creative cause, yet Aphrodite is the joint cause with him, she who enchants our souls with her charm and sends down to earth from the upper air rays of light most sweet and stainless, aye, more lustrous than gold itself. I desire to mete out to you still more of the theology of the Phoenicians, and whether it be to some purpose my argument as it proceeds will show. The inhabitants of Emesa,^[102] a place from time immemorial sacred to Helios, associate with Helios in their temples Monimos and Azizos.^[103] Iamblichus, from whom I have taken this and all besides, a little from a great store, says that the secret meaning to be interpreted is that Monimos is Hermes and Azizos Ares, the assessors of Helios, who are the channel for many blessings to the region of our earth.

Such then are the works of Helios in the heavens, and, when completed by means of the gods whom I have named, they reach even unto the furthest bounds of the earth. But to tell the number of all his works in the region below the moon would take too long. Nevertheless I must describe them also in a brief summary. **[151]** Now I am aware that I mentioned them earlier when I claimed^[104] that from things visible we could observe the invisible properties of the god's substance, but the argument demands that I should expound them now also, in their proper order.

I said then that Helios holds sway among the intellectual gods in that he unites into one, about his own undivided substance, a great multitude of the gods: and further, I demonstrated that among the gods whom we can perceive, who revolve eternally in their most blessed path, he is leader and lord; since he bestows on their nature its generative power, and fills the whole heavens not only with visible rays of light but with countless other blessings that are invisible; and, further, that the blessings which are abundantly supplied by the other visible gods are made perfect by him, and that even prior to this the visible gods themselves are made perfect by his unspeakable and divine activity. In the same manner we must believe that on this our world of generation certain gods have alighted who are linked together with Helios: and these gods guide the four-fold nature of the elements, and inhabit, together with the three higher races,^[105] those souls which are upborne by the elements. But for the divided souls^[106] also, of how many blessings is he the cause! For he extends to them the faculty of judging, and guides them with justice, and purifies them by his brilliant light. Again, does he not set . in motion the whole of nature and kindle life therein, by bestowing on it generative power from on high? But for the divided natures also, is not he the cause that they journey to their appointed end?^[107] For Aristotle says that man is begotten by man and the sun together.^[108] Accordingly the same theory about King Helios must surely apply to all the other activities of the divided souls. Again, does he not produce for us rain and wind and the clouds in the skies, by employing, as though it were matter, the two kinds of vapour? **[152]** For when he heats the earth he draws up steam and smoke, and from these there arise not only the clouds but also all the physical changes on our earth, both great and small.

But why do I deal with the same questions at such length, when I am free at last to come to my goal, though not till I have first celebrated all the blessings that Helios has given to mankind? For from him are we born, and by him are we nourished. But his more divine gifts, and all that he bestows on our souls when he frees them from the body and then lifts them up on high to the region of those substances that are akin to the god; and the fineness and vigour of his divine rays, which are assigned as a sort of vehicle for the safe descent of our souls into this world of generation; all this, I say, let others celebrate in fitting strains, but let me believe it rather than demonstrate its truth. However, I need not hesitate to discuss so much as is known to all. Plato says^[109] that the sky is our instructor in wisdom. For from its contemplation we have learned to know the nature of number, whose distinguishing characteristics we know only from the course of the sun. Plato himself says that day and night were created first.^[110] And next, from observing the moon's light, which was bestowed on the goddess by Helios, we later progressed still further in the understanding of these matters: in every case conjecturing the harmony of all things with this god. For Plato himself says somewhere^[111] that our race was by nature doomed to toil, and so the gods pitied us and gave us Dionysus and the Muses as playfellows. And we recognised that Helios is their common lord, since he is celebrated as the father of Dionysus and the leader of the Muses. And has not Apollo, who is his colleague in empire, set up oracles in every part of the earth, and given to men inspired wisdom, and regulated their cities by means of religious and political ordinances? And he has civilised the greater part of the world by means of Greek colonies, and so made it easier for the world to be governed by the Romans. **[153]** For the Romans themselves not only belong to the Greek race, but also the sacred ordinances and the pious belief in the gods which they have established and maintain are, from beginning to end, Greek. And beside this they have established a constitution not inferior to that of any one of the best governed states, if indeed it be not superior to all others that have ever been put into practice. For which reason I myself recognise that our city is Greek, both in descent and as to its constitution.

Shall I now go on to tell you how Helios took thought for the health and safety of all men by begetting Asclepios^[112] to be the saviour of the whole world? and how he bestowed on us every kind of excellence by sending down to us Aphrodite together with Athene, and thus laid down for our protection what is almost a law, that we should only unite to beget our kind? Surely it is for this reason that, in agreement with the course of the sun, all plants and all the tribes of living things are aroused to bring forth their kind. What need is there for me to glorify his beams and his light? For surely everyone knows how terrible is night without a moon or stars, so that from this he can calculate how great a boon for us is the light of the sun? And this very light he supplies at night, without ceasing, and directly, from the moon in those upper spaces where it is needed, while he grants us through the night a truce from toil. But there would be no limit to the account if one should endeavour to describe all his gifts of this sort. For there is no single blessing in our lives which we do not receive as a gift from this god, either perfect from him alone, or, through the other gods, perfected by him.

Moreover he is the founder of our city.^[113] For not only does Zeus, who is glorified as the father of all things, inhabit its citadel^[114] together with Athene and Aphrodite, but Apollo also dwells on the Palatine Hill, and Helios himself under this name of his which is commonly known to all and familiar to all. **[154]** And I could say much to prove that we, the sons of Romulus and Aeneas, are in every way and in all respects connected with him, but I will mention briefly only what is most familiar. According to the legend, Aeneas is the son of Aphrodite, who is subordinate to Helios and is his kinswoman. And the tradition has been handed down that the founder of our city was the son of Ares, and the paradoxical element in the tale has been believed because of the portents which later appeared to support it. For a she-wolf, they say, gave him suck. Now I am aware that Ares, who is called Azizos by the Syrians who inhabit Emesa, precedes Helios in the sacred procession, but I mentioned it before, so I think I may let that pass. But why is the wolf sacred only to Ares and not to Helios? Yet men call the period of a year "lycabas,"^[115] which is derived from "wolf." And not only Homer^[116] and the famous men of Greece call it by this name, but also the god himself, when he says: "With dancing does he bring to a close his journey of twelve months, even the lycabas." Now do you wish me to bring forward a still greater proof that the founder of our city was sent down to earth, not by Ares alone, though perhaps some noble daemon with the character of Ares did take part in the fashioning of his mortal body, even he who is said to have visited Silvia^[117] when she was carrying water for the bath of the goddess,^[118] but the whole truth is that the soul of the god Quirinus^[119] came down to earth from Helios; for we must, I think, believe the sacred tradition. And the close conjunction of Helios and Selene, who share the empire over the visible world, even as it had caused his soul to descend to earth, in like manner caused to mount upwards him whom it received back from the earth, after blotting out with fire from a thunderbolt^[120] the mortal part of his body. So clearly did she who creates earthly matter, she whose place is at the furthest point below the sun, receive Quirinus when he was sent down to earth by Athene, goddess of Forethought; and when he took flight again from earth she led him back straightway to Helios, the King of the All.

[155] Do you wish me to mention yet another proof of this, I mean the work of King Numa?^[121] In Rome maiden priestesses^[122] guard the undying flame of the sun at different hours in turn; they guard the fire that is produced on earth by the agency of the god. And I can tell you a still greater proof of the power of this god, which is the work of that most divine king himself. The months are reckoned from the moon by, one may say, all other peoples; but we and the Egyptians alone reckon the days of every year according to the movements of the sun. If after this I should say that we also worship Mithras, and celebrate games in honour of Helios every four years, I shall be speaking of customs that are somewhat recent.^[123] But perhaps it is better to cite a proof from the remote past. The beginning of the cycle of the year is placed at different times by different peoples. Some place it at the spring equinox, others at the height of summer, and many in the late autumn; but they each and all sing the praises of the most visible gifts of Helios. One nation celebrates the season best adapted for work in the fields, when the earth bursts into bloom and exults, when all the crops are just beginning to sprout, and the sea begins to be safe for sailing, and the disagreeable, gloomy winter puts on a more cheerful aspect; others again award the crown to the summer season,^[124] since at that time they can safely feel confidence about the yield of the fruits, when the grains have already been

harvested and midsummer is now at its height, and the fruits on the trees are ripening. Others again, with still more subtlety, regard as the close of the year the time when all the fruits are in their perfect prime and decay has already set in. For this reason they celebrate the annual festival of the New Year in late autumn. But our forefathers, from the time of the most divine king Numa, paid still greater reverence to the god Helios. They ignored the question of mere utility, I think, because they were naturally religious and endowed with unusual intelligence; but they saw that he is the cause of all that is useful, [156] and so they ordered the observance of the New Year to correspond with the present season; that is to say when King Helios returns to us again, and leaving the region furthest south and, rounding Capricorn as though it were a goal-post, advances from the south to the north to give us our share of the blessings of the year. And that our forefathers, because they comprehended this correctly, thus established the beginning of the year, one may perceive from the following. For it was not, I think, the time when the god turns, but the time when he becomes visible to all men, as he travels from south to north, that they appointed for the festival. For still unknown to them was the nicety of those laws which the Chaldaeans and Egyptians discovered, and which Hipparchus^[125] and Ptolemy^[126] perfected: but they judged simply by sense-perception, and were limited to what they could actually see.

But the truth of these facts was recognised, as I said, by a later generation. Before the beginning of the year, at the end of the month which is called after Kronos,^[127] we celebrate in honour of Helios the most splendid games, and we dedicate the festival to the Invincible Sun. And after this it is not lawful to perform any of the shows that belong to the last month, gloomy as they are, though necessary. But, in the cycle, immediately after the end of the Kronia^[128] follow the Heliaia. That festival may the ruling gods grant me to praise and to celebrate with sacrifice! And above all the others may Helios himself, the King of the All, grant me this, even he who from eternity has proceeded from the generative substance of the Good: even he who is midmost of the midmost intellectual gods; who fills them with continuity and endless beauty and superabundance of generative power and perfect reason, yea with all blessings at once, and independently of time! And now he illumines his own visible abode, which from eternity moves as the centre of the whole heavens, and bestows a share of intelligible beauty on the whole visible world, and fills the whole heavens with the same number of gods as he contains in himself in intellectual form. [157] And without division they reveal themselves in manifold form surrounding him, but they are attached to him to form a unity. Aye, but also, through his perpetual generation and the blessings that he bestows from the heavenly bodies, he holds together the region beneath the moon. For he cares for the whole human race in common, but especially for my own city,^[129] even as also he brought into being my soul from eternity, and made it his follower. All this, therefore, that I prayed for a moment ago, may he grant, and further may he, of his grace, endow my city as a whole with eternal existence, so far as is possible, and protect her; and for myself personally, may he grant that, so long as I am permitted to live, I may prosper in my affairs both human and divine; finally may he grant me to live and serve the state with my life, so long as is pleasing to himself and well for me and expedient for the Roman Empire!

This discourse, friend Sallust,^[130] I composed in three nights at most, in harmony with the three-fold creative power of the god,^[131] as far as possible just as it occurred to my memory: and I have ventured to write it down and to dedicate it to you because you thought my earlier work on the Kronia^[132] was not wholly worthless. But if you wish to meet with a more complete and more mystical treatment of the same theme, then read the writings of the inspired Iamblichus on this subject,^[133] and you will find there the most consummate wisdom which man can achieve. And may mighty Helios grant that I too may attain to no less perfect knowledge of himself, and that I may instruct all men, speaking generally, but especially those who are worthy to learn. And so long as Helios grants let us all in common revere Iamblichus, the beloved of the gods. For he is the source for what I have here set down, a few thoughts from many, as they occurred to my mind. However I know well that no one can utter anything more perfect than he, nay not though he should labour long at the task and say very much that is new. For he will naturally diverge thereby from the truest knowledge of the god. [158] Therefore it would probably have been a vain undertaking to compose anything after Iamblichus on the same subject if I had written this discourse for the sake of giving instruction. But since I wished to compose a hymn to express my gratitude to the god, I thought that this was the best place

in which to tell, to the best of my power, of his essential nature. And so I think that not in vain has this discourse been composed. For the saying "To the extent of your powers offer sacrifice to the immortal gods,"^[134] I apply not to sacrifice only, but also to the praises that we offer to the gods. For the third time, therefore, I pray that Helios, the King of the All, may be gracious to me in recompense for this my zeal; and may he grant me a virtuous life and more perfect wisdom and inspired intelligence, and, when fate wills, the gentlest exit that may be from life, at a fitting hour; and that I may ascend to him thereafter and abide with him, for ever if possible, but if that be more than the actions of my life deserve, for many periods of many years!

Footnotes

1. Plutarch, *Pompeius* 24. For a full description of the origin and spread of Mithraism see Cumont, *Textes et Monuments figures relatifs aux mysteres de Mithra*, 1896, 1899, *Les Mysteres de Mithra*, 1902, and *Les religions orientates dans le paganisme romain*, 1909 (English translation by G. Showerman, 1911).
2. On Julian's triad cf. Naville, *Julien l'Apostat et la philosophic du polytheisme*, Paris, 1877.
3. *Concerning Isis and Osiris* 46.
4. 148 b
5. *Iliad* 17. 447.
6. As opposed to the unreasoning soul, ἄλογος ψυχή, that is in animals other than man. Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, and Porphyry allowed some form of soul to plants, but this was denied by Iamblichus, Julian, and Sallust.
7. He refers to his initiation into the cult of Mithras.
8. When he was still a professed Christian.
9. i.e. not only prophets and emperors but all men are related to Helios.
0. Aristotle, *Physic* 2. 2. 194 b; cf. 151 d.
 1. Plato, *Timaeus* 42 d.
 2. Rome.
 3. At the beginning of January; cf. 156 c.
 4. Julian distinguishes the visible sun from his archetype, the offspring of the Good.
 5. cf. *Oration* 7. 237 c.
 6. cf. 144 a, 149 c.
 7. i.e. the intelligible world, νοητός, comprehended only by pure reason; the intellectual, νοερός, endowed with intelligence; and thirdly the world of sense-perception αἰσθητός. The first of these worlds the Neo-Platonists took over from Plato, *Republic* 508 foll.; the second was invented by Iamblichus.
 8. Though Aristotle did not use this phrase, it was his theory of a fifth element superior to the other four, called by him "aether" or "first element," *De Coelo* 1. 3 270b, that suggested to Iamblichus

the notion of a fifth substance or element; cf. *Theologumena Arithmeticae* 35, 22 Ast, where he calls the fifth element "aether."

9. Pindar *fr.* 107, and Sophocles, *Antigone* 100 ἀκτὶς ἀελίου.

0. *Republic* 508 b.

1. Julian conceives of the sun in three ways; first as transcendental, in which form he is indistinguishable from the Good in the intelligible world, secondly as Helios-Mithras, ruler of the intellectual gods, thirdly as the visible sun.

2. 133 d—134 a is a digression on the light of the sun.

3. i.e. the stars.

4. cf. 138 b.

5. *De Anima* 419 a; Aristotle there says that light is the actualisation or positive determination of the transparent medium. Julian echoes the whole passage.

6. Aristotle, *De Anima* 418 A.

7. Mind, νοῦς, is here identified with Helios; cf. Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 1. 19. 9. Sol mundi mens est, "the sun is the mind of the universe"; Iamblichus, *Protrepticus* 21, 115; Ammianus Marcellinus, 21. 1. 11.

8. 133 b.

9. Julian echoes Plato, *Republic* 507, 508.

0. cf. 146 d.

1. i.e. the stationary positions and the direct and retrograde movements of the planets.

2. 157 c.

3. 144 a, b, 149 c.

4. This oracular verse is quoted as Orphic by Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 1. 18. 18; but Julian, no doubt following Iamblichus, substitutes Serapis for Dionysus at the end of the verse. The worship of Serapis in the Graeco-Roman world began with the foundation of a Serapeum by Ptolemy Soter at Alexandria. Serapis was identified with Osiris, the Egyptian counterpart of Dionysus.

5. *Phaedo* 80 d; in *Cratylus* 403 Plato discusses, though not seriously, the etymology of the word "Hades."

6. Ἄϊδης, "Unseen."

7. *Cratylus* 403 b.

8. *Phaedo* 83 d.

9. *Theogony* 371; cf. Pindar, *Isthmian* 4. 1.

0. Hyperion means "he that walks above."

1. *Iliad* 8. 480; *Odyssey* 1. 8.

2. *Odyssey* 12. 383.

3. They had devoured the oxen of the sun; *Odyssey* 12. 352 foll.

4. *Iliad* 8. 24; Zeus utters this threat against the gods if they should aid either the Trojans or the Greeks.
5. *Iliad* 18. 239.
6. *Iliad* 21. 6.
7. Julian now describes the substance or essential nature, οὐσία, of Helios, 137d—142b.
8. i.e. The sun, moon and planets; the orbits of the planets are complicated by their direct and retrograde movements.
9. cf. 133 d.
0. Julian defines the ways in which Helios possesses μεσότης, or middleness; he is mediator and connecting link as well as locally midway between the two worlds and the centre of the intellectual gods; see Introduction, p. 350.
1. cf. Empedocles, fr. 18; 122, 2; 17, 19 Diels.
2. Plato, *Timaeus* 33 a.
3. cf. 139c; *Oration* 5. 165 c, 166 d, 170 c.
4. cf. 167 d. In *Timaeus* 58 a it is the revolution of the whole which by constriction compresses all matter together, but Julian had that passage in mind. In Empedocles it is the Titan, Aether, i.e. the Fifth Substance, that "binds the globe." fr. 38 Diels.
5. Plato in *Timaeus* 41a, distinguishes "the gods who revolve before our eyes" from "those who reveal themselves so far as they will." Julian regularly describes, as here, a triad; every one of his three worlds has its own unconditioned being (ἀυθύπόστατον); its own creative power (δημιουργία); its own power to generate life (γόνιμον τῆς ζωῆς); and in every case, the middle term is Helios as a connecting link in his capacity of thinking or intellectual god (νοερός).
6. Julian now describes the three kinds of substance (οὐσία) and its three forms (εἶδη) in the three worlds.
7. i.e. the visible heavenly bodies.
8. Helios connects the forms (Plato's Ideas) which exist in the intelligible world, with those which in our world ally themselves with matter; cf. *Oration* 5. 171b.
9. i.e. the heavenly bodies.
0. These angels combine, as does a model, the idea and its hypostazisation; cf. 142 a, *Letter to the Athenians* 275 B. Julian nowhere defines angels, but Porphyry as quoted by Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 10, 9, distinguished them from daemons and placed them in the aether.
1. cf. 141 B.
2. i.e. the heavenly bodies; cf. *Fragment of a Letter* 295 a.
3. The powers and activities of Helios are now described, 142 d—152 a.
4. *Nicomachean Ethics* 7. 14. 1154 b.

5. cf. 148 c, *Timaeus* 47 a, *Republic* 529 b, where Plato distinguishes mere star-gazing from astronomy.
6. *Timaeus* 32 b; Plato says that to make the universe solid, "God set air and water between fire and earth."
7. cf. 144 c.
8. cf. 144 c. 179 a; Proclus on Plato, *Timaeus* 203 e, says that because Dionysus was torn asunder by the Titans, his function is to divide wholes into their parts and to separate the forms (εἶδη).
9. Julian calls Dionysus the son of Helios 152 c, d, and the son of Zeus, *Oration* 5. 179 b.
0. cf. 153b, where Asclepius is called "the saviour of the All" and *Against the Christians* 200 a.
 1. The sun.
 2. Plato, *Symposium* 206 b τοκός ἐν καλῷ.
 3. i.e. Intellectual Helios.
 4. i.e. Intelligible Helios.
 5. cf. 141 b, *Letter to the Athenians* 275 b.
 6. Plato, *Laws* 713 d defines daemons as a race superior to men but inferior to gods; they were created to watch over human affairs; Julian, *Letter to Themistius* 258 b echoes Plato's description; cf. Plotinus 3. 5. 6; pseudo-Iamblichus, *De Mysteriis* 1. 20. 61; Julian 2. 90 b.
 7. i.e. the individual souls; by using this term, derived from the Neo-Platonists and Iamblichus, Julian implies that there is an indivisible world soul; cf. Plotinus 4. 8. 8 ἡ μὲν ὅλη (ψυχὴ) . . . αἰδὲ ἐν μέρει γεγόμεναι.
 8. *Timaeus* 37 c; when the Creator had made the universe, he invented Time as an attribute of "divided substance."
 9. For Julian's debt to Iamblichus cf. 150 d, 157 b, c.
 0. Kronos, Zeus, Ares, Helios, Aphrodite, Hermes, Selene are the seven planets; cf. 149 d. Though Helios guides the others he is counted with them.
 1. i.e. the fixed stars; cf. Iamblichus, *Theologumena arithmeticae* 56. 4 ἡ περιέχουσα τὰ πάντα σφαῖρα ὀγδόη, "the eighth sphere that encompasses all the rest."
 2. The Graces are often associated with Spring; Julian seems to be describing obscurely the annual course of the sun.
 3. Necessity played an important part in the cult of Mithras and was sometimes identified with the constellation Virgo who holds the scales of Justice.
 4. For the adoption of the Dioscuri into the Mithraic cult see Cumont. Julian does not give his own view, though he rejects that of the later Greek astronomers. Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 1. 21. 22 identifies them with the sun.

5. *Odyssey* 11, 303; Philo Judaeus, *De Decalogo* 2. 190, τὸν τε οὐρανὸν εἰς ἡμισφαίρια τῷ λόγῳ διχῆ διανείμαντες, τὸ μὲν ὑπὲρ γῆς τὸ δ' ὑπὸ γῆς, Διοσκούρους ἐκάλεσαν τὸ τῆς ἑτερομήρου ζῶης αὐτῶν προστεταυσάμενοι διήγημα.
6. i.e. the torrid zone. On the equator in the winter months shadows fall due north at noon, in the summer months due south; this is more or less true of the whole torrid zone; cf. ἀμφίκιος which has the same meaning.
7. *Iliad* 14. 246.
8. For the affectation of mystery cf. 152 b, 159 a, 172 d.
9. Plutarch, *Demosthenes* 4, quotes this phrase as peculiarly Platonic; cf. Plato, *Laws* 676 a.
0. cf. 143 b and note.
1. Literally "life-bringer," Aristotle's phrase for the zodiac.
2. cf. Zeller, *Philosophie der Griechen* III. 2⁴ p. 753, notes.
3. There is a play on the word κύκλος, which means both "sphere" and "circle."
4. The Egyptian sun-god, whose worship was introduced first into Greece and later at Rome.
5. Athene as goddess of Forethought was worshipped at Delphi, but her earlier epithet was *pronaia* "whose statue is in front of the temple"; cf. Aeschylus, *Eumenides* 21, Herodotus 8. 37: late writers often confuse these forms. Julian applies the epithet προναία to the mother of the gods 179 a, and to Prometheus 182 d; cf. 131 c.
6. This verse was quoted from an unknown source by Eustathius on *Iliad* 1. p. 83. "The Grey-eyed" is a name of Athene.
7. *Iliad* 8. 538; 13. 827.
8. On Athene cf. *Oration* 7. 230 a; *Against the Christians* 235 c.
9. cf. 152 d. Julian derives his theory of the position and functions of the moon from Iamblichus; cf. Proclus on Plato, *Timaeus* 258 f.
0. cf. 154 a, and Proclus on Plato, *Timaeus* 155 f, 259 b, where Aphrodite is called "the binding goddess" συνδετικήν, and "harmoniser" συναρμωστικήν.
1. i.e. as the planet Venus.
2. cf. *Caesars* 313 a, *Misopogon* 357 c. Emesa in Syria was famous for its temple to Baal, the sun-god. The Emperor Heliogabalus (218—222 A.D.) was born at Emesa and was, as his name indicates, a priest of Baal, whose worship he attempted to introduce at Rome.
3. The "strong god," identified with the star Lucifer.
4. 133 d, 138 b.
5. cf. 145 c.
6. cf. 145 c.
7. i.e. their ascent after death to the gods.
8. *Physics* 2. 2. 194 b; cf. 131 c.

9. *Republic* 529, 530; *Epinomis* 977 a.
0. i.e. as a unit of measurement; *Timaeus* 39 b, 47 a.
1. *Laws* 653 c, d, 665 a.
2. cf. 144 c: *Against the Christians* 200, 235 b.c. Asclepius plays an important part in Julian's religion, and may have been intentionally opposed, as the son of Helios-Mithras and the "saviour of the world," to Jesus Christ.
3. Rome.
4. This refers to the famous temple of Jupiter on the Capitoline; cf. *Oration* 1. 29 d. The three shrines in this temple were dedicated to Jupiter, Minerva and Juno, but Julian ignores Juno because he wishes to introduce Aphrodite in connection with Aeneas.
5. Julian accepts the impossible etymology "path of the wolf"; Lycabas means "path of light," cf. lux.
6. *Odyssey*, 14. 161. The word was also used on Roman coins with the meaning "year."
7. Silvia the Vestal virgin gave birth to twins, Romulus and Remus, whose father was supposed to be Mars (Ares).
8. Vesta, the Greek Hestia, the goddess of the hearth.
9. The name given to Romulus after his apotheosis; cf. *Caesars* 307 b.
0. For the legend of his translation see Livy 1. 16; Plutarch, *Romulus* 21; Ovid, *Fasti* 2. 496; Horace, *Odes* 3. 3. 15 foll.
1. To Numa Pompilius, the legendary king who reigned next after Romulus, the Romans ascribed the foundation of many of their religious ceremonies.
2. The Vestal virgins.
3. The Heliaia, *solis agon*, was founded by the Emperor Aurelian at Rome in 274 a., d.; but the "unconquerable sun," *sol invictus*, had been worshipped there for fully a century before Aurelian's foundation; see Usener, *Sol invictus*, in *Rheinisches Museum*, 1905. Julian once again, *Caesars* 336 C calls Helios by his Persian name Mithras.
4. The Attic year began with the summer solstice.
5. A Greek astronomer who flourished in the middle of the second century B.C. His works are lost.
6. Claudius Ptolemy an astronomer at Alexandria 127—151 A.D.
7. i.e. December.
8. The festival of Saturn, the Saturnalia, was celebrated by the Latins at the close of December, and corresponds to our Christmas holidays. Saturn was identified with the Greek god Kronos, and Julian uses the Greek word for the festival in order to avoid, according to sophistic etiquette, a Latin name.
9. Rome.
0. See Introduction, p. 351.

1. For the threefold creative force cf. Proclus on *Timaeus* 94 cd. Here Julian means that there are three modes of creation exercised by Helios now in one, now in another, of the three worlds; cf. 135 B.C.
2. This work is lost.
3. i.e. his treatise *On the Gods*, which is not extant.
4. Hesiod, *Works and Days* 336.



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