


# Antipope Hippolytus



*Philosophumena;  
or, The refutation  
of all heresies,  
Volume II*



**Antipope Hippolytus**

# **Philosophumena; or, The refutation of all heresies, Volume II**



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# PHILOSOPHUMENA

# BOOK VI

## SIMON MAGUS, VALENTINUS, AND THEIR FOLLOWERS

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1. THESE are the contents of the 6th (book) of the *Refutation of all Heresies*. p. 242  
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5. What has been held by Marcus and Colarbasus [and their disciples] and that some of them gave heed to magic arts and Pythagorean numbers.
6. Now such opinions as belong to those who have taken their principles from the serpent<sup>[1]</sup> and, when the time arrived, of their own accord brought their doctrines into light, we have set forth in the Book before this, being the Vth of the *Refutation of all Heresies*. Here, p. 243.  
however, I will not keep silence as to the opinions of those who come after (them),<sup>[2]</sup> but will leave not one unrefuted, if it be possible to keep them all in mind,

together with their secret rites which are justly to be called orgies, inasmuch as those who dare such things are not far from God's wrath[3]—to use the word in its etymological sense.

## **1. *About Simon.***

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7. It seems then right now to set forth also the (doings) of Simon,[4] the man of Gitto,[5] a village of Samaria, whereby we shall show that those also who followed (him) taking hints from other names have ventured upon like things. This Simon, being skilled in magic arts and having played upon many, sometimes by the Thrasymedean[6] process in the way we have set forth above, but sometimes working iniquity by means of devils, designed to deify himself, (although only) a human sorcerer filled with desperation whom the Apostles refuted in *p. 244.* the *Acts*.<sup>[7]</sup> Than whom Apsethus the Libyan was much wiser and more modest when he ambitiously attempted to be considered a god in Libya. Whose story as it is not very different from the vain desire of Simon, it seems fitting to narrate as one worthy to have been attempted by Simon himself.

8. Apsethus the Libyan yearned to become a god. But since, after making himself very busy, he utterly failed (to accomplish) his desire, he wished at all events to appear to have become one, and seemed as if he might really effect this in course of time. For the foolish Libyans sacrificed to him as to some divine power, thinking that they must give faith to a voice from heaven above. For he collected and

shut up in one and the same cage a great many of the birds called parrots; there being many parrots in Libya who imitate quite clearly the human voice. For some time he fed the birds and taught them to say "Apsethus is a god": and when the birds had been trained for a long *p. 245.*

time, and repeated the saying which he thought would make Apsethus be considered a god, he opened the cage and let the parrots out in all directions. The noise of the flying birds went forth into all Libya, and their words reached as far as the land of the Greeks.[\[8\]](#) And thus the Libyans being wonderstruck by the voices of the birds and not understanding the trick played by Apsethus, held him for a god. But a certain Greek having carefully studied the clever device of the so-called god, not only refuted him by the (mouth of the) same parrots but removed from the earth that human quack and rascal. The Greek shut up many of the parrots and taught them to say instead (of their former speech): "Apsethus shut us up and forced us to say: 'Apsethus is a god.'" And the Libyans hearing the parrots' recantation (and) all assembling with one mind burned Apsethus.[\[9\]](#)

9. This (sort of man) one must suppose Simon the magician (to be), so that we would far sooner liken him to the Libyan who was born a man than to (Him) who is really God.[\[10\]](#) But if the details of the likeness be held accurate and the magician had some such passion as Apsethus, we will undertake to teach Simon's parrots that Simon who stood, stands and will stand was not Christ, but a man (sprung) from seed, born of a woman[\[11\]](#) *p. 246.* begotten from blood and fleshly desire like



the rest, and that he knew this to be so, we shall easily show as the story goes on.[12] But Simon, stupidly and clumsily garbling the Law of Moses—for when Moses has said that God was “a burning and consuming fire,”[13]—he, not having received Moses’ saying rightly, says that fire is the principle of the universals, and not having comprehended the saying that God is not Fire, but a burning and consuming fire, (thereby) not only rends in twain the Law of Moses, but steals from Heraclitus the Obscure.[14] But Simon proclaims that the principle of the universals is a boundless power, speaking thus:—“This is the writing of the Announcement[15] of Voice and Name from the Thought of the great power of the Boundless One. Wherefore it will be sealed up, hidden, concealed and will be in the dwelling-place where the root of the universals is founded.”[16] But he says that the dwelling-place is the same man who has been begotten from blood and that the

*p. 247.*

Boundless Power dwells in him, which (power) he says is the root of the universals. But the Boundless Power, the fire according to Simon, is not simple as the many say who think that the four elements are simple and that fire is simple; but there is a certain double nature of fire, and of this double nature he calls one part hidden and the other manifest. But the hidden (parts) have been hidden in the manifest parts of the fire, and the manifest have come into being by the hidden. This it is which Aristotle calls potentiality and action, and Plato the comprehensible and the perceptible.[17]

And the manifest (part) of the fire contains within itself all which one can perceive[18] or which can escape one, but

remains visible; but the hidden (part) contains everything which one can perceive as something intelligible but which evades the sense or which as not being thoroughly understood one passes over. But it must be said generally that of all things which are perceptible and intelligible, which Simon calls hidden and manifest,[19] the supercelestial fire is the Treasure-house,[20] like unto the great tree which was seen by Nebuchadnezzar in a dream, from which all flesh is fed.[21] And he *p. 248.* considers the trunk, the boughs, the leaves, and the bark on the outside of it to be the manifest part of the fire. All these things which are attached to the great tree the flame of the all-devouring fire causes to vanish. But the fruit of the tree, if it be made a perfect likeness[22] and has received its own shape, is placed in a storehouse and not in the fire. For the fruit, he says, has been produced that it may be put in a storehouse, but the chaff that it may be cast into the fire, which (chaff) is the trunk which has not been produced for its own sake, but for that of the fruit.

10. And this is, he says, what is written in the Scripture: "The vine of the Lord Sabaoth is the house of Israel, and a man of Judah his beloved plant." [23] But if a man of Judah is his beloved plant, it proves, he says, that a tree is nothing else than a man. But of its secretion and dissolution, he says, the Scripture has spoken sufficiently, and for the instruction of those who have been made completely after (its) likeness,[24] the saying is enough that: "All flesh is grass and all the glory of the flesh as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower fadeth away: but the

word of the Lord abideth for ever.”[25] But *p. 249.*  
the word, he says, is the word and speech  
of the Lord born in the mouth, save which there is no other  
place of generation.

11. But, to be brief, since the fire is such according to  
Simon, and all things are seen and unseen as they are heard  
and unheard, numbered and unnumbered, in the *Great  
Announcement* he calls a perfect intellectual[26] every one  
of those (beings) which can be boundlessly conceived by  
the mind in a boundless way[27] and can speak and think  
and act, as says Empedocles:—

For earth by earth we see, and water by water  
And (divine) æther by æther, yet destroying fire by  
fire,  
And (love) by love, and strife in gloomy strife.—

(Karsten, v. 321.)

12. For, he says, he considered all the parts of the fire  
which are invisible to have sense and a share of mind.[28]  
Therefore the cosmos, he says, came into *p. 250.*  
being begotten by the unbegotten fire. But  
it began to be, he says, after this fashion:—He who was  
produced from the beginning from that fire took six roots,  
the first ones of the principle of generation.[29] And he says  
that the roots came from the fire in pairs, which roots he  
calls Mind and Thought, Voice and Name, Reasoning and  
Passion,[30] but that the whole of the Boundless Power  
together is in these six roots potentially, but not actively.  
The which Boundless Power he says is He who Stood,

Stands, and will Stand. Who if he be made into a complete image (of the fire) will be in substance, power, greatness, and effect one and the same with that Unbegotten and Boundless Power, and lacking nothing possessed by that unbegotten and unchanging and infinite power. But if he remains potentially only in the six powers and is not made into a complete image (of the fire), he is done away with and is lost like as the capacity for grammar or geometry in man's soul. For power taking to itself skill *p. 251.*

becomes a light of the things which are:

but if it does not take unto itself (skill) it is unskilfulness and darkness and as if it were not, it perishes[31] with the man at his death.

13. But of these six powers and the seventh which is with the six, he calls the first pair, (to wit) Nous and Epinoia, Heaven and Earth. And (he says) that the masculine (partner) looks down from on high upon and takes thought for his spouse and that the Earth below receives the intellectual fruits proper to her brought down from Heaven to Earth. Wherefore, he says, the Logos beholding often the things born from Nous and Epinoia, that is from Heaven and Earth, says: "Hear, O Heaven, and give ear, O Earth, for the Lord has spoken. I have begotten and raised up sons, but they have disregarded me." [32] He who thus speaks, he says, is the Seventh Power who Stood, Stands and will Stand. For he is the cause of those fair things which Moses praised and said that they were very good. *p. 252.*

And Phone and Onoma are the Sun and

Moon, and Logismos and Enthymesis Air and Water. But with



all these is mingled and compounded, as I have said, the great and Boundless Power, He who has Stood.[33]

14. Since, therefore, Moses spake: "In six days God created Heaven and Earth and the seventh day he rested from all his works,"[34] Simon after re-arranging the passage, makes himself out a god. When then they say that three days passed before the Sun and Moon existed,[35] they shadow forth Nous and Epinoia and the Seventh Power, the Boundless One. For these three powers were born before all the others. When they say: "Before all the Aeons He has begotten me,"[36] (Simon) says that this was spoken of the Seventh Power. But the same Seventh Power, which was a power existing in the Boundless Power which was begotten before all the Aeons, this is, he says, the Seventh Power of whom Moses said: "And the Spirit of God was borne above the water,"[37] that is, he says, the spirit containing all things within itself, an image of the *p. 253.*

Boundless Power, of whom Simon says "image of the imperishable form which alone orders all things." For that power which was borne above the water having come into being, he says, from the imperishable form, alone orders all things. Now when some such and like preparations of the cosmos had come to pass, God, he says, moulded[38] man, taking dust from the earth. But he fashioned him not simple but twofold[39] according to image and resemblance. But the spirit which was borne above the water is an image, which spirit if it is not made a complete likeness,[40] perishes with the world, as it abides only potentially and does not exist in activity. This, he says, is the saying, "Lest ye be judged with the world." [41] But if

it be made a complete likeness and is born from an Indivisible Point as it is written in the Announcement, the small will become great. But it will be great in the Boundless and Unchanging Aeon, being born no more.

How then and in what manner, he says, did God form man in Paradise? For this is his opinion. Let, he says, Paradise be the womb, and that this is true the Scripture teaches when it says: "I am he who fashioned thee in thy mother's womb."[\[42\]](#) For this also he wishes to be thus written. Moses, he says, speaking in *p. 254.*

allegory, calls Paradise the womb if we are to believe the word. But if God fashions man in the womb of his mother, that is, in Paradise, as I have said, let Paradise be the womb and Edem the placenta: "And a river went forth from Edem and watered Paradise"[\[43\]](#) (this is) the navel-string. The navel-string, he says, separates into four heads. For on each side of the navel are set two arteries, conduits of breath, and two veins, conduits of blood. But when he says, the navel-string goes forth from the placenta it takes root in the infant by the epigastrium which all men commonly call the navel. And the two veins it is through which flows and is borne from Edem (the placenta) the blood to the so-called gates of the liver whence the child is fed. But the arteries as we have said, are the conduits of the breath[\[44\]](#) which pass behind on either side of the bladder round the pelvis and make connection with the great artery by the spine called the aorta, and thus through the ventricles the breath flows upon the heart and causes movement of the embryo. For the embryo *p. 255.*  
in course of formation in Paradise neither

takes food by the mouth, nor breathes through the nostrils. For, as it exists amid waters, death is at its feet if it should breathe. For it would then draw in the waters and die. But it is girt about almost wholly by the envelope called the amnion and is fed through the navel, and through the aorta which is by the spine, it receives, as I have said[45] the substance of the breath.

15. Therefore, he says, the river flowing forth from Edem separates into four heads (or) four conduits, that is, into the child's four senses, sight, smell, taste, and touch. For the infant while being formed in Paradise has these senses only. This, he says, is the Law which Moses laid down; and agreeably with that same Law each of the Books is written, as their titles clearly show. The first book (is) *Genesis* (and) the title of the book, he says, suffices for the knowledge of the universals. For, he says, this is genesis, that is sight into which one of the sections of the river separates; for the world is seen by sight. The title of the *p. 256.*

second book is *Exodus*. For that which is born after crossing the Red Sea comes into the Desert—he calls the blood, he says, the Red Sea—and tastes bitter water. For bitter, he says, is the water which comes after the Red Sea, which (water) is the way of knowledge of life pursued through painful and bitter things. But when changed by Moses, that is by the Logos, that bitter (water) becomes sweet. And that this is so, can be known by all in common in the saying of the poets:—

Black was it at the root, but the flower was like milk  
The gods call it Moly, but hard it is to dig

For mortal men, but to the gods all things are possible.—

(HOMER, *Odyssey*, X, 304 ff.)

16. What has been said by the nations, he says, suffices for the thorough knowledge of the universals to those who have ears to hear. For not only he who has tasted this fruit is not turned into a beast by Circe; but those also who have been already brutified by use of the *p. 257.* powers of such fruit, he moulds again into their first and proper form and restores them to type and recalls their (original) impress. And the faithful man and he who is beloved by that witch is, he says, revealed through that milk-like and divine fruit. Likewise *Leviticus* the third book which is the smell or inspiration.[46] For this book is of sacrifices and oblations. For where there is a sacrifice there comes a certain savour of fragrance from it through the incense, of which fragrance the sense of smell (ought to be a test).[47] *Numbers*, the fourth book he calls taste...[48] where speech operates. But *Deuteronomy*, he says, is written with reference to the sense of touch of the child in course of formation. For as the touch, touching the things perceived by the other senses, sums up and confirms them, teaching us whether (anything) be hard or hot or cold,[49] so the fifth book of the Law is the summary of the four books written before it. All the unbegotten things, then, he says, are in potentiality not in activity, like the grammatical or geometrical art. If then one should *p. 258.* chance upon the fitting word and doctrine, and the bitter should be changed into sweet, that is, the



spears into reaping-hooks and the swords into ploughshares,[50] (the child) will not be chaff and sticks for producing fire, but a perfect fruit made in semblance (of), as I have said (and) equal and like to, the Unbegotten and Boundless Power. But should he remain only a tree and should not make a perfect fruit fashioned in complete resemblance, he will be removed. For the axe is near, he says, to the roots of the tree. Every tree, he says, which maketh not fair fruit is cut down and cast into the fire.[51]

17. There is then, according to Simon, that blessed and incorruptible thing hidden in everything, potentially not actively, which is He who Stood, Stands and will Stand. It stood above in the Unbegotten Power, it stands below amid the rush of the waters having been begotten in likeness, and it will stand on high beside the blessed Unbegotten Power if it be made in (his) perfect semblance. For there are, he says, three who have stood, and unless there are three Aeons who have stood, then the *p. 259.*

Unbegotten One who according to them is borne over the water, who by resemblance has been fashioned again perfect (and) heavenly, who in one thought alone[52] is more lacking than the Unbegotten Power, is not in its proper place.[53] This is what they say: "I and thou, thou one before me, I after thee, am I." This, he says, is one power, divided above, below, begetting itself, increasing itself, seeking itself, finding itself, being its own mother, its own father, its own sister, its own spouse, its own daughter, its own son, a mother-father,[54] being one root of the universals.

And that, he says, the beginning of the generation of things begotten is from fire, he understands in some such fashion as this: In all things whatever which have birth, the beginning of the desire of generation comes from fire. As, for instance, the desire for mutable generation[55] is called “being inflamed” [with love]. But the fire from being one, turns into two. For in the man, he says, the blood which is hot and yellow as fire is depicted, turns into seed; but in the woman the selfsame blood (turns) into milk. And from the turning in the male comes generation and *p. 260.*

from that in the female the nourishment of that which is generated.[56] This, he says, is the flaming sword turning about to guard the path to the Tree of Life. For the blood is turned to seed and milk and the same power becomes father and mother of those which are born and the increase of those which are nourished, itself lacking nothing and being sufficient unto itself. But the Tree of Life is guarded he says, through the turning of the flaming sword, as we have said, which (sword) is the Seventh Power which is from itself, which contains all things (and) which lies stored up in the six powers. For if the flaming sword did not turn about, that fair tree would perish and be destroyed. But if the Logos which is lying stored up potentially therein, is turned into seed and milk, being lord of its proper place wherein is begotten a Logos of souls,—then from the smallest spark it will become great and increase in every sense and will be a boundless power unchangeable in the aeon which changes not until it is in the Boundless Aeon. [57]

18. By this argument, then, Simon avowedly became a god to those of no understanding, like that Apsethus the Libyan, being (said to be) begotten and *p. 261.* subject to suffering when he existed potentially, but (becoming) impassible (from passible, and unbegotten)[58] from begotten when he was made in perfect semblance and becoming perfect came forth from the first two powers, that is Heaven and Earth. For Simon speaks explicitly of this in the *Announcement*, thus:—

“Unto you I say what I say, and I write what I write. The writing is this. There are two stems[59] of all the Aeons, having neither beginning nor end, from one root, which is Power-Silence[60] unseen and incomprehensible. One of them appears on high, who is a great power, the mind of the universals, who orders all things and (is) a male. And the other below is a great Thought, a female giving birth to all things. These, then, being set over against each other[61] form a pair and show forth the middle space, an incomprehensible air having neither beginning nor end. In this (space) is a Father who upholds all things and nourishes those which have a beginning and end. This is He who Stood, Stands, and will Stand, being a masculo-feminine power after the likeness of the pre-existing Boundless Power[62] which has neither beginning nor end but exists in oneness. For the thought which came forth from the (power) in oneness was two. And that was one. For he when he contained her within himself was alone, *p. 262.* nor was he indeed first although he existed beforehand, but having himself appeared from himself, a second came into being. But he was not called

Father until she named him Father. Just as then he, drawing himself forth from himself, manifested to himself his own thought, so also the thought having appeared did not create him; but beholding him, hid the Father—that is Power—within herself;[\[63\]](#) and there is a masculo-feminine Power-and-Thought when they are set over against each other. For Power does not differ at all from thought, they being one. From the things on high is discovered Power; from those below Thought. Thus then it is that that which appeared from them being one is found to be two, a masculo-feminine having the female within it. This is Mind in Thought for they being one when undivided from one another are yet found to be two.”

19. Simon then having discovered (all) this, fraudulently interprets as he wishes not only the (words) of Moses, but also those of the poets. For he turns into *p. 263.* allegory the Wooden Horse and Helen with the Torch and other things, altering which to the affairs of himself and his Epinoia, he leads astray many. And he says that she is that sheep which was lost, who ever dwelling in many women[\[64\]](#) troubles the powers in the cosmos by her transcendent beauty. Wherefore also the Trojan War occurred on account of her. For Epinoia herself dwelt in Helen at that time, and all the authorities suing for her (favours), faction and war arose among the nations in which she appeared. Wherefore indeed Stesichorus having railed at her in his verses had his eyes blinded, but having repented and written the Palinode, was restored to sight. [\[65\]](#) She, being changed from one body to another by the angels and authorities below who made *p. 264.*



the world, came at last to stand in a brothel[66] in Tyre, a city of Phœnicia, coming to which (Simon) found her. For at her first enquiry, he said he had come to her aid, that he might free her from her bonds, and when he had redeemed her she went about with him pretending that she was the lost sheep, and he saying that he was the Power above all things. But the rogue having fallen in love with the hussy, the so-called Helen, and having bought her enjoyed her, and being ashamed (before) his disciples made up this story. But they who became (in time) the imitators of the error and of Simon Magus do like things, pretending that they ought to have (promiscuous) intercourse like beasts, saying: "All earth is earth and it matters not where one sows, so long as one sows." And they also bless this intercourse saying that the same is perfect love and the "Holy of Holies" and that "ye shall sanctify one another." For they say that they are not overcome by what any one else would call evil, for that they have been redeemed. And that Simon having redeemed Helen has in like manner *p. 265.*

brought salvation to men through his own discernment.[67] For since the angels misgoverned the world through love of rule, he says that he came to set it straight, having changed his shape and making himself like the rulers[68] and authorities and angels, and that he appeared as a man, though he was not a man and seemed to suffer in Judæa, though he did not suffer.[69] But he appeared to the Jews as Son, in Samaria as Father, and among the other nations as Holy Spirit. And that he submitted to be called by whatever name men wished to call him. And that the Prophets were inspired by the world-

making angels to utter their prophecies. Wherefore they who have believed on Simon and Helen do not heed them, [70] and to this day do what they will as being free. For they claim that they have been saved by his grace. For no one is liable to judgment if he does anything evil; for evil exists not by nature, but by law. For he says it is the *p. 266.*  
angels who made the world who made the Law whatever they wished, thinking to enslave those who hearkened to them. And again they say that (there will be) a dissolution of the world for the redemption of their own men.[71]

20. Therefore the disciples of this (man) practise magic arts and incantations, and send out love-philtres and charms and the demons called dream-bringers for the troubling of whom they will. But they also do reverence to the so-called Paredri.[72] And they have an image of Simon in the form of Zeus, and (another) of Helen in the form of Athena, and they bow down to them calling the one "Lord" and the other "Lady." [73] But if any one among them seeing these images should call them by the name of Simon or Helen, he is cast out as being ignorant of their mysteries. This Simon when he had led astray many in Samaria by magic arts was refuted by the Apostles, and having been *p. 267.*  
laid under a curse as it is written in the *Acts*, afterwards in desperation designed these things [74] until having come to Rome, he withstood the Apostles. Whom Peter opposed when he was deceiving many by sorceries. He at length coming into t.....te, [75] taught sitting under a plane-tree. And finally his refutation being very near [76] through effluxion of time, he said that if

buried alive he would rise again the third day. And having given orders that a grave should be dug by his disciples, he bade them bury him. And they having done what he commanded, he remains there to this day; for he was not the Christ. This then is Simon's story, taking hints from which Valentinus calls (the same things) by other names. For Nous and Aletheia, Logos and Zoe, Anthropos and Ecclesia are Simon's six roots, Nous-Epinoia, Phone-Onoma, Logismos-Enthymesis. But since we have sufficiently set forth Simon's fable making, let us see what Valentinus says. [\[77\]](#)

## **2. Concerning Valentinus.**

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21. The heresy of Valentinus, [\[78\]](#) then, *p. 268*. exists, having a Pythagorean and Platonic foundation. For Plato in the *Timæus* modelled himself entirely on Pythagoras, as is seen also by his "Pythagorean stranger" being Timæus himself. Wherefore it seems fitting that we should begin by recalling to mind a few (points) of the theory of Pythagoras and Plato, and should then describe the (teaching) of Valentinus. For if the opinions of Pythagoras and Plato are also included in the (books) painfully written by us earlier, yet I shall not be unreasonable in recalling [\[79\]](#) in epitome their most leading tenets [\[80\]](#) in order that by their closer comparison and likeness of composition, the doctrines of Valentinus may be more intelligible. For as (the Pythagoreans and Platonists) took their opinions of old from the Egyptians and taught them anew to the Greeks, so (Valentinus) while fraudulently

attempting to establish his own teaching by them, carved their system into names and numbers, *p. 269.*  
calling them [by names] and defining them  
by measures of his own. Whence he has constructed a heresy Greek indeed, but not referable to Christ.

22. The wisdom of the Egyptians is, then, the beginning of Plato's theory in the *Timæus*. For from this, Solon[81] taught the Greeks the whole position regarding the birth and destruction of the cosmos by means of a certain prophetic statement, as Plato says, the Greeks being then children and knowing no older theologic learning. In order then that we may follow closely the words which Valentinus let fall, I will now set out as preface what it was that Pythagoras of Samos taught as philosophy after that silence praised by the Greeks. And then [I will point out] those things which Valentinus takes from Pythagoras and Plato and with solemn words attributes to Christ, and before Christ to the Father of the universals and to that Sige who is given as a spouse to the Father.

23. Now Pythagoras declared that the unbegotten monad was the principle of the universals[82] and the parent of the dyad and of all the other numbers. And he says that the monad is the father of the dyad and the *p. 270.*  
dyad the mother of all engendered things  
(and) a bearer of things begotten. And Zaratas,[83] also, the teacher of Pythagoras, calls the one father, but the two, mother. For the dyad has come into being from a monad according to Pythagoras, and the monad is masculine and first, but the dyad female and second. From the dyad, again, as Pythagoras says, (come) the triad and the other numbers

one after the other up to 10. For Pythagoras knew that this 10 is the only perfect number.[84] For (he saw that) the 11 and 12 were an addition to and re-equipment of the decad, and not the generation of some other number. All solid bodies beget what is given to them from the bodiless.[85] For, he says, the Point which is indivisible is at once a point and a beginning of the bodies and the bodiless together. And, he says, from the point comes a line, and a superficies extended in depth makes, he says, a solid figure. Whence the Pythagoreans have a certain oath as to the harmony of the four elements. And they make oath thus:—

“Yea by the Tetractys handed down *p. 271.*  
to our head  
A source of eternal nature containing within itself  
roots.”[86]

For the beginning of natural and solid bodies is the Tetractys as the monad is of the intelligible ones.[87] But that the Tetractys gives birth to the perfect number as among the intelligibles the (monad) does to the 10, they teach thus. If one beginning to count, says 1, and adds 2, and then 3 in like manner, these will make 6. (Add) yet another (*i. e.*) 4 and there in the same way will be the total 10. For the 1, 2, 3 and 4 become 10, the perfect number. Thus, he says, the Tetractys will in all things imitate the intelligible monad having been thus able to bring forth a perfect number.

24. There are, therefore, according to Pythagoras, two worlds, one intelligible which has the monad as its beginning, but the other the perceptible. This last is the

Tetractys containing Iota,[88] the one tittle, a perfect number. Thus the Iota, the one tittle, is *p.* 272.

received by the Pythagoreans as the first and chiefest, and as the substance of the Intelligible both intelligibly and perceptibly. Belonging to which are the nine bodiless accidents which cannot exist apart from substance, (viz.) Quantity, Quality, Wherefore, Where, and When, and also Being, Having, Doing and Suffering.[89] There are therefore nine accidents to substance reckoned in with which they comprise[90] the perfect number, the 10. Wherefore the universe being divided, as we have said, into an intelligible and a perceptible world, we have also reason from the intelligible in order that by it we may behold the substance of the intelligible, the bodiless and the divine. But we have, he says, five senses, smell, sight, hearing, taste and touch. By these we arrive at a knowledge of perceptible things, and so, he says, the perceptible world is separated from the intelligible; and that we have an organ of knowledge for each of them, we learn from this. None of the intelligibles, he says, can become known to us through sense: for, he says, eye has not seen that, nor ear heard, nor has it become known, he says, by any other of the senses whatever. Nor again by reason can one come to a knowledge of the perceptible; but one *p.* 273.

must see that a thing is white, and taste that it is sweet, and know by hearing that it is just or unjust; and if any smell is fragrant or nauseous, that is the work of the sense of smell and not of the reason. And it is the same with the things relating to touch. For that a thing is hard or soft or hot or cold cannot be known through the hearing, but



the test of these things is the touch. This being granted, the setting in order of the things that have been and are is seen to come about arithmetically. For, just as we, beginning by addition of monads (or dyads) or triads and of the other numbers strung together, make one very large compound number, and on the other hand work by subtracting from the total strung together and by analysing by a fresh calculation what has been brought together arithmetically;—so, he says, the cosmos is bound together by a certain arithmetical and musical bond, and by its tightening and slackening, its addition and subtraction, is ever and everywhere preserved uncorrupted.

25. For instance in some such fashion as this also do the Pythagoreans describe the duration of the world:—

“For it was before and will be. Never *p. 274.*

I ween

Will the unquenchable aeon be devoid of these two.”

What are these (two)? Strife and Love.[\[91\]](#) But their love makes the cosmos incorruptible and eternal, as they think. For substance and the cosmos are one. But strife rends asunder and diversifies, and tries by every means to make the world divide. Just as one cuts arithmetically the myriad into thousands and hundreds and tens and drachmas, and obols, and quarters by dividing it into small parts, so Strife cuts the substance of the cosmos into animals, plants, metals and such like things. And Strife is according to them, the Demiurge[\[92\]](#) of the generation of all things coming to pass, and Love governs and provides for the universe, so that it abides. And having collected into one the scattered and rent (things) of the universe and leading them forth from life, it joins and adds them to the universe so that it may abide and be one. Never therefore will Strife cease from dividing the cosmos, nor Love from attaching together the separated things of the cosmos. *p. 275.*

Something like this it seems is the

“distribution”[\[93\]](#) according to Pythagoras. But Pythagoras says that the stars are fragments[\[94\]](#) of the sun and that the souls of animals are borne (to us) from the stars. And that the same (souls) are mortal when they are in the body being buried as it were in a tomb; but that they will rise again and become immortal when we are separated from our bodies. Whence Plato being asked by some one what Philosophy is, said: “It is a separation of soul from body.”

26. Pythagoras, then, becoming a learner of these opinions, declared some of them by means of enigmas and such like phrases, (such as:) "If you are away from home, turn not back. Otherwise, the Furies the helpers of justice will punish you."[\[95\]](#) (For) he calls your home the body and the passions the Furies. If then, he says, *p.* 276. you are away from home, that is: if you have come forth from the body, do not seek after it; but if you return to it, the passions will again shut you up in a body. For they think there is a change of bodies (μετενσωμάτωσις); as also Empedocles, when Pythagorizing, says. For the pleasure-loving souls, as Plato says,[\[96\]](#) if they do not philosophize when in man's estate, must pass through the bodies of all animals and plants and again return to a human body. But if (such a one) does philosophize,[\[97\]](#) he will in the same way go on high thrice to his kindred star; but if he does not philosophize will return again to the same things. Thus he tells us that the soul is at once mortal if it be ruled by the Furies, that is, by the Passions, and immortal if it flees from them.

27. But seeing that we have picked out for narration the things darkly uttered to his disciples under the veil of symbols, it seems fitting to recall other sayings (of his), because the heresiarchs attempt to deal in symbols in the same way; and these not their own, but using the words of Pythagoras. Now Pythagoras teaches his *p.* 277. disciples saying "Bind up the bed-sack," since they who are setting out on a journey make their clothing into a bundle, so as to be ready for the road. Thus he wishes his disciples to be ready, as if at any moment