

Episode 275 - TD05 - Does Motion Provide Evidence For The Existence of God And Divinity Of The Soul?

Post by "Cassius" of April 4, 2025 at 5:30 PM

Cicero says this is explained by Plato in Phaedrus -- that dialogue is here:

[Phaedrus \(Jowett\) - Wikisource, the free online library](#)

[Phaedrus, by Plato](#)

Includes this:

Quote

The soul through all her being is immortal, for that which is ever in motion is immortal; but that which moves another and is moved by another, in ceasing to move ceases also to live. Only the self-moving, never leaving self, never ceases to move, and is the fountain and beginning of motion to all that moves besides. Now, the beginning is unbegotten, for that which is begotten has a beginning; but the beginning is begotten of nothing, for if it were begotten of something, then the begotten would not come from a beginning. But if unbegotten, it must also be indestructible; for if beginning were destroyed, there could be no beginning out of anything, nor anything out of a beginning; and all things must have a beginning. And therefore the self-moving is the beginning of motion; and this can neither be destroyed nor begotten, else the whole heavens and all creation would collapse and stand still, and never again have motion or birth. But if the self-moving is proved to be immortal, he who affirms that self-motion is the very idea and essence of the soul will not be put to confusion. For the body which is moved from without is soulless; but that which is moved from within has a soul, for such is the nature of the soul. But if this be true, must not the soul be the self-moving, and therefore of necessity unbegotten and immortal? Enough of the soul's immortality.

We'll need to parse this because it would appear that Epicurus would probably agree with some of this, but not all.

For reference, a Chatgpt summary of Phaedrus:

In Plato's *Phaedrus*, the major arguments revolve around the nature of love (eros), rhetoric, and the soul. Here's a summary of the key themes:

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/4374-episode-275-td05-does-motion-provide-evidence-for-the-existence-of-god-and-divin/?postID=34616#post34616>

1. The Nature of Love (Eros):

- **Socrates' Speech on Love:** Initially, Phaedrus presents the idea of love as a powerful and noble force. Socrates, in his speech, challenges the traditional view of love. He argues that true love, or divine madness, comes from the gods and can lead the soul toward greater understanding and virtue.
- **The Role of the Lover and the Beloved:** Socrates describes the relationship between the lover and the beloved as one where the lover aims to guide the beloved's soul toward the good. Love is depicted as a form of divine madness that can inspire individuals to seek truth and beauty.

2. The Myth of the Soul:

- Socrates elaborates on the idea that the soul is immortal and undergoes cycles of reincarnation. The soul is drawn to the divine and seeks to return to the Forms, especially the Form of Beauty, which it glimpses during moments of deep love. This connection between love and the soul's journey is central to understanding why love can be seen as a guiding force.

3. Rhetoric and the Art of Persuasion:

- **The Power of Rhetoric:** In the dialogue, Socrates and Phaedrus discuss the role of rhetoric and its potential to either lead people toward truth or manipulate them for personal gain. Socrates critiques rhetoricians who rely on persuasion without understanding the true nature of their subject matter.
- **Rhetoric as a Skill for the Good:** Socrates suggests that rhetoric should be used to guide the soul toward truth, not just to win arguments. The best rhetorician is one who understands the nature of the soul and uses this knowledge to persuade others toward justice and virtue.

4. The Ideal Speaker:

- An important section of the *Phaedrus* concerns the idea of the ideal speaker or rhetor. This person is someone who knows both the truth and the soul of their audience. Effective rhetoric is not just about delivering a persuasive speech but also about understanding the nature of the soul and the specific needs of the audience.

5. The Role of Philosophy:

- The dialogue ultimately suggests that philosophy is the highest form of knowledge and the true goal of love is to lead one's soul toward wisdom and the contemplation of the Forms, especially the Form of Beauty.

In short, *Phaedrus* explores the intersection of love, rhetoric, and the soul, arguing that both love and rhetoric, when properly understood and applied, can guide individuals toward higher understanding and truth.