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Euthyphro

Euthyphro. What strange thing has happened, Socrates, that you have left your accustomed haunts in the Lyceum and are now haunting the portico where the king archon sits? For it cannot be that you have an action before the king, as I have.

Socrates. Our Athenians, Euthyphro, do not call it an action, but an indictment.

Euthyphro. What? Somebody has, it seems, brought an indictment against you; for I don't accuse you of having brought one against anyone else.

Socrates. Certainly not.

Euthyphro. But someone else against you?

Socrates. Quite so.

Euthyphro. Who is he?

Socrates. I don't know the man very well myself, Euthyphro, for he seems to be a young and unknown person. His name, however, is Meletus, I believe. And he is of the deme of Pitthus, if you remember any Pitthian Meletus, with long hair and only a little beard, but with a hooked nose.

Euthyphro. I don't remember him, Socrates. But what sort of an indictment has he brought against you?

Socrates. What sort? No mean one, it seems to me; for the fact that, young as he is, he has apprehended so important a matter reflects no small credit upon him. For he says he knows how the youth are corrupted and who those are who corrupt them. He must be a wise man; who, seeing my lack of wisdom and that I am corrupting his fellows, comes to the State, as a boy runs to his mother, to accuse me.

And he seems to me to be the only one of the public men who begins in the right way; for the right way is to take care of the young men first, to make them as good as possible, just as a good husbandman will naturally take care of the young plants first and afterwards of the rest.

Socrates. And so Meletus, perhaps, is first clearing away us who corrupt the young plants, as he says; then after this, when he has turned his attention to the older men, he will bring countless most precious blessings upon the State,—at least, that is the natural outcome of the beginning he has made.

Euthyphro. I hope it may be so, Socrates; but I fear the opposite may result. For it seems to me that he begins by injuring the State at its very heart, when he undertakes to harm you. Now tell me, what does he say you do that corrupts the young?

Socrates. Absurd things, my friend, at first hearing. For he says I am a maker of gods; and because I make new gods and do not believe in the old ones, he indicted me for the sake of these old ones, as he says.

Euthyphro. I understand, Socrates; it is because you say the divine monitor keeps coming to you. So he has brought the indictment against you for making innovations in religion, and he is going into court to slander you, knowing that slanders on such subjects are readily accepted by the people. Why, they even laugh at me and say I am crazy when I say anything in the assembly about divine things and foretell the future to them. And yet there is not one of the things I have foretold that is not true; but they are jealous of all such men as you and I are. However, we must not be disturbed, but must come to close quarters with them.

Socrates. My dear Euthyphro, their ridicule is perhaps of no consequence. For the Athenians, I fancy, are not much concerned, if they think a man is clever, provided he does not impart his clever notions to others; but when they think he makes others to be like himself, they are angry with him, either through jealousy, as you say, or for some other reason.

Euthyphro. I don't much desire to test their sentiments toward me in this matter.

Socrates. No, for perhaps they think that you are reserved and unwilling to impart your wisdom. But I fear that because of my love of men they think that I not only pour myself out copiously to anyone and everyone without payment, but that I would even pay something myself, if anyone would listen to me. Now if, as I was saying just now,

they were to laugh at me, as you say they do at you, it would not be at all unpleasant to pass the time in the court with jests and laughter; but if they are in earnest, then only soothsayers like you can tell how this will end.

Euthyphro. Well, Socrates, perhaps it won't amount to much, and you will bring your case to a satisfactory ending, as I think I shall mine.

Socrates. What is your case, Euthyphro? Are you defending or prosecuting?

Euthyphro. Prosecuting.

Socrates. Whom?

Euthyphro. Such a man that they think I am insane because I am prosecuting[1] him.

Socrates. Why? Are you prosecuting one who has wings to fly away with?

Euthyphro. No flying for him at his ripe old age.

Socrates. Who is he?

Euthyphro. My father.

Socrates. Your father, my dear man?

Euthyphro. Certainly.

Socrates. But what is the charge, and what is the suit about?

Euthyphro. Murder, Socrates.

Socrates. Heracles! Surely, Euthyphro, most people do not know where the right lies; for I fancy it is not everyone who can rightly do what you are doing, but only one who is already very far advanced in wisdom.

Euthyphro. Very far, indeed, Socrates, by Zeus.

Socrates. Is the one who was killed by your father a relative? But of course he was; for you would not bring a charge of murder against him on a stranger's account.

Euthyphro. It is ridiculous, Socrates, that you think it matters whether the man who was killed was a stranger or a relative, and do not see that the only thing to consider is whether the action of the slayer was justified or not, and that if it was justified one ought to let him alone, and if not, one ought to proceed against him, even if he share one's hearth and eat at one's table. For the pollution is the

[1]The Greek word has much the same meaning as the Latin *prosequor,* from which the English "prosecute" is derived, follow, pursue, and is at the same time the technical term for prosecute.

same if you associate knowingly with such a man and do not purify yourself and him by proceeding against him. In this case, the man who was killed was a hired workman of mine, and when we were farming at Naxos, he was working there on our land. Now he got drunk, got angry with one of our house slaves, and butchered him. So my father bound him hand and foot, threw him into a ditch, and sent a man here to Athens to ask the religious adviser what he ought to do. In the meantime he paid no attention to the man as he lay there bound, and neglected him, thinking that he was a murderer and it did not matter if he were to die. And that is just what happened to him. For he died of hunger and cold and his bonds before the messenger came back from the adviser. Now my father and the rest of my relatives are angry with me, because for the sake of this murderer I am prosecuting my father for murder. For they say he did not kill him, and if he had killed him never so much, yet since the dead man was a murderer, I ought not to trouble myself about such a fellow, because it is unholy for a son to prosecute his father for murder. Which shows how little they know what the divine law is in regard to holiness and unholiness.

Socrates. But, in the name of Zeus, Euthyphro, do you think your knowledge about divine laws and holiness and unholiness is so exact that, when the facts are as you say, you are not afraid of doing something unholy yourself in prosecuting your father for murder?

Euthyphro. I should be of no use, Socrates, and Euthyphro would be in no way different from other men, if I did not have exact knowledge about all such things.

Socrates. Then the best thing for me, my admirable Euthyphro, is to become your pupil and, before the suit with Meletus comes on, to challenge him and say that I always thought it very important before to know about divine matters and that now, since he says I am doing wrong by acting carelessly and making innovations in matters of religion, I have become your pupil. And

"Meletus," I should say,

"if you acknowledge that Euthyphro is wise in such matters, then believe that I also hold correct opinions, and do not bring me to trial; and if you do not acknowledge that, then bring a suit against him, my teacher, rather than against me, and charge him with corrupting the old, namely, his father and me, which he does by teaching me and by correcting and punishing his father." And if he does not do as I ask and does not release me from the indictment or bring it against you in my stead, I could say in the court the same things I said in my challenge to him, could I not?

Euthyphro. By Zeus, Socrates, if he should undertake to indict me, I fancy I should find his weak spot, and it would be much more a question about him in court than about me.

Socrates. And I, my dear friend, perceiving this, wish to become your pupil; for I know that neither this fellow Meletus, nor anyone else, seems to notice you at all, but he has seen through me so sharply and so easily that he has indicted me for impiety. Now in the name of Zeus, tell me what you just now asserted that you knew so well. What do you say is the nature of piety and impiety, both in relation to murder and to other things? Is not holiness always the same with itself in every action and, on the other hand, is not unholiness the opposite of all holiness, always the same with itself and whatever is to be unholy possessing some one characteristic quality?

Euthyphro. Certainly, Socrates.

Socrates. Tell me then, what do you say holiness is, and what unholiness?

Euthyphro. Well then, I say that holiness is doing what I am doing now, prosecuting the wrongdoer who commits murder or steals from the temples or does any such thing, whether he be your father, or your mother or anyone else, and not prosecuting him is unholy. And, Socrates, see what a sure proof I offer you,—a proof I have already given to others,—that this is established and right and that we ought not to let him who acts impiously go unpunished, no matter who he may be. Men believe that Zeus is the best and most just of the gods, and they acknowledge that he put his father in bonds because he wickedly devoured his children, and he in turn had mutilated his father for similar reasons; but they are incensed against me because I proceed against my father when he has done wrong, and so they are inconsistent in what they say about the gods and about me.

Socrates. Is not this, Euthyphro, the reason why I am being prosecuted, because when people tell such stories about the gods I find it hard to accept them? And therefore, probably, people will say I am wrong. Now if you, who know so much about such things, accept these tales, I suppose I too must give way. For what am I to say, who confess frankly that I know nothing about them? But tell me, in the name of Zeus, the god of friendship, do you really believe these things happened?

Euthyphro. Yes, and still more wonderful things than these, Socrates, which most people do not know.

Socrates. And so you believe that there was really war between the gods, and fearful enmities and battles and other things of the sort,

such as are told of by the poets and represented in varied designs by the great artists in our sacred places and especially on the robe which is carried up to the Acropolis at the great Panathenaea? for this is covered with such representations. Shall we agree that these things are true, Euthyphro?

Euthyphro. Not only these things, Socrates; but, as I said just now, I will, if you like, tell you many other things about the gods, which I am sure will amaze you when you hear them.

Socrates. I dare say. But you can tell me those things at your leisure some other time. At present try to tell more clearly what I asked you just now. For, my friend, you did not give me sufficient information before, when I asked what holiness was, but you told me that this was holy which you are now doing, prosecuting your father for murder.

Euthyphro. Well, what I said was true, Socrates.

Socrates. Perhaps. But, Euthyphro, you say that many other things are holy, do you not?

Euthyphro. Why, so they are.

Socrates. Now call to mind that this is not what I asked you, to tell me one or two of the many holy acts, but to tell the essential aspect, by which all holy acts are holy; for you said that all unholy acts were unholy and all holy ones holy by one aspect. Or don't you remember?

Euthyphro. I remember.

Socrates. Tell me then what this aspect is, that I may keep my eye fixed upon it and employ it as a model and, if anything you or anyone else does agrees with it, may say that the act is holy, and if not, that it is unholy.

Euthyphro. If you wish me to explain in that way, I will do so.

Socrates. I do wish it.

Euthyphro. Well then, what is dear to the gods is holy, and what is not dear to them is unholy.

Socrates. Excellent, Euthyphro, now you have answered as I asked you to answer. However, whether it is true, I am not yet sure; but you will, of course, show that what you say is true.

Euthyphro. Certainly.

Socrates. Come then, let us examine our words. The thing and the person that are dear to the gods are holy, and the thing and the person that are hateful to the gods are unholy; and the two are not the same, but the holy and the unholy are the exact opposites of each other. Is not this what we have said?

Euthyphro. Yes, just this.

Socrates. And it seems to be correct?

Euthyphro. I think so, Socrates.

Socrates. Well then, have we said this also, that the gods, Euthyphro, quarrel and disagree with each other, and that there is enmity between them?

Euthyphro. Yes, we have said that.

Socrates. But what things is the disagreement about, which causes enmity and anger? Let us look at it in this way. If you and I were to disagree about number, for instance, which of two numbers were the greater, would the disagreement about these matters make us enemies and make us angry with each other, or should we not quickly settle it by resorting to arithmetic?

Euthyphro. Of course we should.

Socrates. Then, too, if we were to disagree about the relative size of things, we should quickly put an end to the disagreement by measuring?

Euthyphro. Yes.

Socrates. And we should, I suppose, come to terms about relative weights by weighing?

Euthyphro. Of course.

Socrates. But about what would a disagreement be, which we could not settle and which would cause us to be enemies and be angry with each other? Perhaps you cannot give an answer offhand; but let me suggest it. Is it not about right and wrong, and noble and disgraceful, and good and bad? Are not these the questions about which you and I and other people become enemies, when we do become enemies, because we differ about them and cannot reach any satisfactory agreement?

Euthyphro. Yes, Socrates, these are the questions about which we should become enemies.

Socrates. And how about the gods, Euthyphro. If they disagree, would they not disagree about these questions?

Euthyphro. Necessarily.

Socrates. Then, my noble Euthyphro, according to what you say, some of the gods too think some things are right or wrong and noble or disgraceful, and good or bad, and others disagree; for they would not quarrel with each other if they did not disagree about these matters. Is that the case?

Euthyphro. You are right.

Socrates. Then the gods in each group love the things which they consider good and right and hate the opposites of these things?

Euthyphro. Certainly.

Socrates. But you say that the same things are considered right by some of them and wrong by others; and it is because they disagree about these things that they quarrel and wage war with each other. Is not this what you said?

Euthyphro. It is.

Socrates. Then, as it seems, the same things are hated and loved by the gods, and the same things would be dear and hateful to the gods.

Euthyphro. So it seems.

Socrates. And then the same things would be both holy and unholy, Euthyphro, according to this statement.

Euthyphro. I suppose so.

Socrates. Then you did not answer my question, my friend. For I did not ask you what is at once holy and unholy; but, judging from your reply, what is dear to the gods is also hateful to the gods. And so, Euthyphro, it would not be surprising if, in punishing your father as you are doing, you were performing an act that is pleasing to Zeus, but hateful to Cronus and Uranus, and pleasing to Hephaestus, but hateful to Hera, and so forth in respect to the other gods, if any disagree with any other about it.

Euthyphro. But I think, Socrates, that none of the gods disagrees with any other about this, or holds that he who kills anyone wrongfully ought not to pay the penalty.

Socrates. Well, Euthyphro, to return to men, did you ever hear anybody arguing that he who had killed anyone wrongfully, or had done anything else whatever wrongfully, ought not to pay the penalty?

Euthyphro. Why, they are always arguing these points, especially in the law courts. For they do very many wrong things; and then there is nothing they will not do or say, in defending themselves, to avoid the penalty.

Socrates. Yes, but do they acknowledge, Euthyphro, that they have done wrong and, although they acknowledge it, nevertheless say that they ought not to pay the penalty?

Euthyphro. Oh, no, they don't do that.

Socrates. Then there is something they do not do and say. For they do not, I fancy, dare to say and argue that, if they have really done wrong, they ought not to pay the penalty; but, I think, they say they have not done wrong; do they not?

Euthyphro. You are right.

Socrates. Then they do not argue this point, that the wrongdoer must not pay the penalty; but perhaps they argue about this, who is

a wrongdoer, and what he did, and when.

Euthyphro. That is true.

Socrates. Then is not the same thing true of the gods, if they quarrel about right and wrong, as you say, and some say others have done wrong, and some say they have not? For surely, my friend, no one, either of gods or men, has the face to say that he who does wrong ought not to pay the penalty.

Euthyphro. Yes, you are right about this, Socrates, in the main.

Socrates. But I think, Euthyphro, those who dispute, both men and gods, if the gods do dispute, dispute about each separate act. When they differ with one another about any act, some say it was right and others that it was wrong. Is it not so?

Euthyphro. Certainly.

Socrates. Come now, my dear Euthyphro, inform me, that I may be made wiser, what proof you have that all the gods think that the man lost his life wrongfully, who, when he was a servant, committed murder, was bound by the master of the man he killed, and died as a result of his bonds before the master who had bound him found out from the advisers what he ought to do with him, and that it is right on account of such a man for a son to proceed against his father and accuse him of murder. Come, try to show me clearly about this, that the gods surely believe that this conduct is right; and if you show it to my satisfaction, I will glorify your wisdom as long as I live.

Euthyphro. But perhaps this is no small task, Socrates; though I could show you quite clearly.

Socrates. I understand; it is because you think I am slower to understand than the judges; since it is plain that you will show them that such acts are wrong and that all the gods hate them.

Euthyphro. Quite clearly, Socrates; that is, if they listen to me.

Socrates. They will listen, if they find that you are a good speaker. But this occurred to me while you were talking, and I said to myself:

"If Euthyphro should prove to me no matter how clearly that all the gods think such a death is wrongful, what have I learned from Euthyphro about the question, what is holiness and what is unholiness? For this act would, as it seems, be hateful to the gods; but we saw just now that holiness and its opposite are not defined in this way; for we saw that what is hateful to the gods is also dear to them;" and so I let you off any discussion of this point, Euthyphro. If you like, all the gods may think it wrong and may hate it. But shall we now emend our definition and say that whatever all the gods hate is unholy and whatever they all love is holy, and what some love and others hate is

neither or both? Do you wish this now to be our definition of holiness and unholiness?

Euthyphro. What is to hinder, Socrates?

Socrates. Nothing, so far as I am concerned, Euthyphro, but consider your own position, whether by adopting this definition you will most easily teach me what you promised.

Euthyphro. Well, I should say that what all the gods love is holy and, on the other hand, what they all hate is unholy.

Socrates. Then shall we examine this again, Euthyphro, to see if it is correct, or shall we let it go and accept our own statement, and those of others, agreeing that it is so, if anyone merely says that it is? Or ought we to inquire into the correctness of the statement?

Euthyphro. We ought to inquire. However, I think this is now correct.

Socrates. We shall soon know more about this, my friend. Just consider this question:—Is that which is holy loved by the gods because it is holy, or is it holy because it is loved by the gods?

Euthyphro. I don't know what you mean, Socrates.

Socrates. Then I will try to speak more clearly. We speak of being carried and of carrying, of being led and of leading, of being seen and of seeing; and you understand—do you not?—that in all such expressions the two parts differ one from the other in meaning, and how they differ.

Euthyphro. I think I understand.

Socrates. Then, too, we conceive of a thing being loved and of a thing loving, and the two are different?

Euthyphro. Of course.

Socrates. Now tell me, is a thing which is carried a carried thing because one carries it, or for some other reason?

Euthyphro. No, for that reason.

Socrates. And a thing which is led is led because one leads it, and a thing which is seen is so because one sees it?

Euthyphro. Certainly.

Socrates. Then one does not see it because its a seen thing, but, on the contrary, it is a seen thing because one sees it; and one does not lead it because it is a led thing, but it is a led thing because one leads it; and one does not carry it because it is a carried thing, but it is a carried thing because one carries it. Is it clear, Euthyphro, what I am trying to say? I am trying to say this, that if anything becomes or undergoes, it does not become because it is in a state of becoming, but it is in a state of becoming because it becomes, and it does not undergo because it is a thing which undergoes, but because it undergoes it is a

thing which undergoes; or do you not agree to this?

Euthyphro. I agree.

Socrates. Is not that which is beloved a thing which is either becoming or undergoing something?

Euthyphro. Certainly.

Socrates. And is this case like the former ones: those who love it do not love it because it is a beloved thing, but it is a beloved thing because they love it?

Euthyphro. Obviously.

Socrates. Now what do you say about that which is holy, Euthyphro. It is loved by all the gods, is it not, according to what you said?

Euthyphro. Yes.

Socrates. For this reason, because it is holy, or for some other reason?

Euthyphro. No, for this reason.

Socrates. It is loved because it is holy, not holy because it is loved?

Euthyphro. I think so.

Socrates. But that which is dear to the gods is dear to them and beloved by them because they love it.

Euthyphro. Of course.

Socrates. Then that which is dear to the gods and that which is holy are not identical, but differ one from the other.

Euthyphro. How so, Socrates?

Socrates. Because we are agreed that the holy is loved because it is holy and that it is not holy because it is loved; are we not?

Euthyphro. Yes.

Socrates. But we are agreed that what is dear to the gods is dear to them because they love it, that is, by reason of this love, not that they love it because it is dear.

Euthyphro. Very true.

Socrates. But if that which is dear to the gods and that which is holy were identical, my dear Euthyphro, then if the holy were loved because it is holy, that which is dear to the gods would be loved because it is dear, and if that which is dear to the gods is dear because it is loved, then that which is holy would be holy because it is loved; but now you see that the opposite is the case, showing that the two are different from each other. For the one becomes lovable from the fact that it is loved, whereas the other is loved because it is in itself lovable. And, Euthyphro, it seems that when you were asked what holiness is you were unwilling to make plain its essence, but you mentioned something

that has happened to this holiness, namely, that it is loved by the gods. But you did not tell as yet what it really is. So, if you please, do not hide it from me, but begin over again and tell me what holiness is, no matter whether it is loved by the gods or anything else happens it; for we shall not quarrel about that. But tell me frankly, What is holiness, and what is unholiness?

Euthyphro. But, Socrates, I do not know how to say what I mean. For whatever statement we advance, somehow or other it moves about and won't stay where we put it.

Socrates. Your statements, Euthyphro, are like works of my[2] ancestor Daedalus, and if I were the one who made or advanced them, you might laugh at me and say that on account of my relationship to him my works in words run away and won't stay where they are put. But now—well, the statements are yours; so some other jest is demanded; for they stay fixed, as you yourself see.

Euthyphro. I think the jest does very well as it is; for I am not the one who makes these statements move about and not stay in the same place, but you are the Daedalus; for they would have stayed, so far as I am concerned.

Socrates. Apparently then, my friend, I am a more clever artist than Daedalus, inasmuch as he made only his own works move, whereas I, as it seems, give motion to the works of others as well as to my own. And the most exquisite thing about my art is that I am clever against my will; for I would rather have my words stay fixed and stable than possess the wisdom of Daedalus and the wealth of Tantalus besides. But enough of this. Since you seem to be indolent, I will aid you myself, so that you may instruct me about holiness. And do not give it up beforehand. Just see whether you do not think that everything that is holy is right.

Euthyphro. I do.

Socrates. But is everything that is right also holy? Or is all which is holy right, and not all which is right holy, but part of it holy and part something else?

Euthyphro. I can't follow you, Socrates.

Socrates. And yet you are as much younger than I as you are wiser; but, as I said, you are indolent on account of your wealth of wisdom. But exert yourself, my friend; for it is not hard to understand what

[2]Socrates was the son of a sculptor and was himself educated to be a sculptor. This is doubtless the reason for his reference to Daedalus as an ancestor. Daedalus was a half mythical personage whose statues were said to have been so lifelike that they moved their eyes and walked about.

I mean. What I mean is the opposite of what the poet said, who wrote:"Zeus the creator, him who made all things," "thou wilt not name; for where fear is, there also is reverence."*Stasinus, author of the* Cypria *(Fragm. 20, ed. Kinkel)* Now I disagree with the poet. Shall I tell you how?

Euthyphro. By all means.

Socrates. It does not seem to me true that where fear is, there also is reverence; for many who fear diseases and poverty and other such things seem to me to fear, but not to reverence at all these things which they fear. Don't you think so, too?

Euthyphro. Certainly.

Socrates. But I think that where reverence is, there also is fear; for does not everyone who has a feeling of reverence and shame about any act also dread and fear the reputation for wickedness?

Euthyphro. Yes, he does fear.

Socrates. Then it is not correct to say

"where fear is, there also is reverence." On the contrary, where reverence is, there also is fear; but reverence is not everywhere where fear is, since, as I think, fear is more comprehensive than reverence; for reverence is a part of fear, just as the odd is a part of number, so that it is not true that where number is, there also is the odd, but that where the odd is, there also is number. Perhaps you follow me now?

Euthyphro. Perfectly.

Socrates. It was something of this sort that I meant before, when I asked whether where the right is, there also is holiness, or where holiness is, there also is the right; but holiness is not everywhere where the right is, for holiness is a part of the right. Do we agree to this, or do you dissent?

Euthyphro. No, I agree; for I think the statement is correct.

Socrates. Now observe the next point. If holiness is a part of the right, we must, apparently, find out what part of the right holiness is. Now if you asked me about one of the things I just mentioned, as, for example, what part of number the even was, and what kind of a number it was I should say,

"that which is not indivisible by two, but divisible by two"; or don't you agree?

Euthyphro. I agree.

Socrates. Now try in your turn to teach me what part of the right holiness is, that I may tell Meletus not to wrong me any more or bring suits against me for impiety, since I have now been duly instructed by you about what is, and what is not, pious and holy.

Euthyphro. This then is my opinion, Socrates, that the part of the right which has to do with attention to the gods constitutes piety and holiness, and that the remaining part of the right is that which has to do with the service of men.

Socrates. I think you are correct, Euthyphro; but there is one little point about which I still want information, for I do not yet understand what you mean by "attention." I don't suppose you mean the same kind of attention to the gods which is paid to other things. We say, for example, that not everyone knows how to attend to horses, but only he who is skilled in horsemanship, do we not?

Euthyphro. Certainly.

Socrates. Then horsemanship is the art of attending to horses?

Euthyphro. Yes.

Socrates. And not everyone knows how to attend to dogs, but only the huntsman?

Euthyphro. That is so.

Socrates. Then the huntsman's art is the art of attending to dogs?

Euthyphro. Yes.

Socrates. And the oxherd's art is that of attending to oxen?

Euthyphro. Certainly.

Socrates. And holiness and piety is the art of attending to the gods? Is that what you mean, Euthyphro?

Euthyphro. Yes.

Socrates. Now does attention always aim to accomplish the same end? I mean something like this: It aims at some good or benefit to the one to whom it is given, as you see that horses, when attended to by the horseman's art are benefited and made better; or don't you think so?

Euthyphro. Yes, I do.

Socrates. And dogs are benefited by the huntsman's art and oxen by the oxherd's and everything else in the same way? Or do you think care and attention are ever meant for the injury of that which is cared for?

Euthyphro. No, by Zeus, I do not.

Socrates. But for its benefit?

Euthyphro. Of course.

Socrates. Then holiness, since it is the art of attending to the gods, is a benefit to the gods, and makes them better? And you would agree that when you do a holy or pious act you are making one of the gods better?

Euthyphro. No, by Zeus, not I.

Socrates. Nor do I, Euthyphro, think that is what you meant. Far from it. But I asked what you meant by "attention to the gods" just because I did not think you meant anything like that.

Euthyphro. You are right, Socrates; that is not what I mean.

Socrates. Well, what kind of attention to the gods is holiness?

Euthyphro. The kind, Socrates, that servants pay to their masters.

Socrates. I understand. It is, you mean, a kind of service to the gods?

Euthyphro. Exactly.

Socrates. Now can you tell me what result the art that serves the physician serves to produce? Is it not health?

Euthyphro. Yes.

Socrates. Well then; what is it which the art that serves ship-builders serves to produce?

Euthyphro. Evidently, Socrates, a ship.

Socrates. And that which serves housebuilders serves to build a house?

Euthyphro. Yes.

Socrates. Then tell me, my friend; what would the art which serves the gods serve to accomplish? For it is evident that you know, since you say you know more than any other man about matters which have to do with the gods.

Euthyphro. And what I say is true, Socrates.

Socrates. Then, in the name of Zeus, tell me, what is that glorious result which the gods accomplish by using us as servants?

Euthyphro. They accomplish many fine results, Socrates.

Socrates. Yes, and so do generals, my friend; but nevertheless, you could easily tell the chief of them, namely, that they bring about victory in war. Is that not the case?

Euthyphro. Of course.

Socrates. And farmers also, I think, accomplish many fine results; but still the chief result of their work is food from the land?

Euthyphro. Certainly.

Socrates. But how about the many fine results the gods accomplish? What is the chief result of their work?

Euthyphro. I told you a while ago, Socrates, that it is a long task to learn accurately all about these things. However, I say simply that when one knows how to say and do what is gratifying to the gods, in praying and sacrificing, that is holiness, and such things bring salvation to individual families and to states; and the opposite of what is gratifying to the gods is impious, and that overturns and destroys

everything.

Socrates. You might, if you wished, Euthyphro, have answered much more briefly the chief part of my question. But it is plain that you do not care to instruct me. For now, when you were close upon it you turned aside; and if you had answered it, I should already have obtained from you all the instruction I need about holiness. But, as things are, the questioner must follow the one questioned wherever he leads. What do you say the holy, or holiness, is? Do you not say that it is a kind of science of sacrificing and praying?

Euthyphro. Yes.

Socrates. And sacrificing is making gifts to the gods and praying is asking from them?

Euthyphro. Exactly, Socrates.

Socrates. Then holiness, according to this definition, would be a science of giving and asking.

Euthyphro. You understand perfectly what I said, Socrates.

Socrates. Yes, my friend, for I am eager for your wisdom, and give my mind to it, so that nothing you say shall fall to the ground. But tell me, what is this service of the gods? Do you say that it consists in asking from them and giving to them?

Euthyphro. Yes.

Socrates. Would not the right way of asking be to ask of them what we need from them?

Euthyphro. What else?

Socrates. And the right way of giving, to present them with what they need from us? For it would not be scientific giving to give anyone what he does not need.

Euthyphro. You are right, Socrates.

Socrates. Then holiness would be an art of barter between gods and men?

Euthyphro. Yes, of barter, if you like to call it so.

Socrates. I don't like to call it so, if it is not true. But tell me, what advantage accrues to the gods from the gifts they get from us? For everybody knows what they give, since we have nothing good which they do not give. But what advantage do they derive from what they get from us? Or have we so much the better of them in our bartering that we get all good things from them and they nothing from us?

Euthyphro. Why you don't suppose, Socrates, that the gods gain any advantage from what they get from us, do you?

Socrates. Well then, what would those gifts of ours to the gods be?

Euthyphro. What else than honor and praise, and, as I said before,

gratitude?

Socrates. Then, Euthyphro, holiness is grateful to the gods, but not advantageous or precious to the gods?

Euthyphro. I think it is precious, above all things.

Socrates. Then again, it seems, holiness is that which is precious to the gods.

Euthyphro. Certainly.

Socrates. Then will you be surprised, since you say this, if your words do not remain fixed but walk about, and will you accuse me of being the Daedalus who makes them walk, when you are yourself much more skilful than Daedalus and make them go round in a circle? Or do you not see that our definition has come round to the point from which it started? For you remember, I suppose, that a while ago we found that holiness and what is dear to the gods were not the same, but different from each other; or do you not remember?

Euthyphro. Yes, I remember.

Socrates. Then don't you see that now you say that what is precious to the gods is holy? And is not this what is dear to the gods?

Euthyphro. Certainly.

Socrates. Then either our agreement a while ago was wrong, or if that was right, we are wrong now.

Euthyphro. So it seems.

Socrates. Then we must begin again at the beginning and ask what holiness is. Since I shall not willingly give up until I learn. And do not scorn me, but by all means apply your mind now to the utmost and tell me the truth; for you know, if anyone does, and like Proteus, you must be held until you speak. For if you had not clear knowledge of holiness and unholiness, you would surely not have undertaken to prosecute your aged father for murder for the sake of a servant. You would have been afraid to risk the anger of the gods, in case your conduct should be wrong, and would have been ashamed in the sight of men. But now I am sure you think you know what is holy and what is not. So tell me, most excellent Euthyphro, and do not conceal your thought.

Euthyphro. Some other time, Socrates. Now I am in a hurry and it is time for me to go.

Socrates. Oh my friend, what are you doing? You go away and leave me cast down from the high hope I had that I should learn from you what is holy, and what is not, and should get rid of Meletus's indictment by showing him that I have been made wise by Euthyphro about divine matters and am no longer through ignorance acting carelessly and making innovations in respect to them, and that I shall live a

better life henceforth.

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