

## Prayer, foolishness, and madness

*Stephanus references accompany each question; space is left for notes.*

1. 138a                      What does Alcibiades' gloomy appearance invite Socrates to examine?
2. 138a-138b              Why might deciding what to pray for be the greatest matter of all?
3. 138b                      What follows from the gods granting some prayers but refusing others?
4. 138b                      How can someone pray for harm while sincerely seeking good?
5. 138b-138c              Why does Socrates choose Oedipus as his first example?
6. 138c                      What distinguishes praying for relief from calling down a curse?
7. 138c                      Does calling Oedipus mad answer Socrates' concern about prayer?
8. 138c-138d              Is madness the opposite of wisdom in the same sense as foolishness?
9. 139a-139b              Must a person be either wise or foolish, with no condition between?
10. 139b                      Can one thing have more than one opposite?
11. 139c                      What does calling most citizens mad reveal about the argument?
12. 139c-139d              Does ordinary civic life refute the claim that foolishness is madness?

## Distinctions and practical wisdom

*Stephanus references accompany each question; space is left for notes.*

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| 13. | 139e      | What does the example of sore eyes clarify about kinds of illness?     |
| 14. | 139e-140a | Why does reversing a true statement sometimes make it false?           |
| 15. | 140a      | What role does shared attention play in finding an answer?             |
| 16. | 140a-140b | How can illnesses differ while still belonging to one general kind?    |
| 17. | 140b      | Why appeal to physicians when explaining these differences?            |
| 18. | 140b-140c | What does the example of craftsmen add to the medical analogy?         |
| 19. | 140c      | Is madness presented as a different kind or a greater degree of folly? |
| 20. | 140c-140d | How can flattering names conceal a person's foolishness?               |
| 21. | 140c-140d | Does renaming folly change how we judge or treat it?                   |
| 22. | 140d      | What has been gained by returning to the question of who is wise?      |
| 23. | 140e      | Why define wisdom through knowing what to do and say?                  |
| 24. | 140e      | Could someone know what ought to be done and still act badly?          |

## Ambition and the costs of success

*Stephanus references accompany each question; space is left for notes.*

25. 141a How do ordinary mistaken prayers differ from Oedipus' curse?
26. 141a-141b What does the imagined divine offer reveal about Alcibiades' ambition?
27. 141b Why does Alcibiades assume anyone would welcome such power?
28. 141c What does refusing power at the cost of life reveal about its value?
29. 141c Why is harmful use a further reason to refuse a gift?
30. 141c-141d What must we know before accepting something we desire?
31. 141d-141e How does the story of Archelaus link political desire with love?
32. 141d-141e Does obtaining a tyranny fulfil the desire that first prompted it?
33. 142a Why include the suffering of apparently successful generals?
34. 142b-142c How do the examples of children complicate the meaning of good fortune?
35. 142c Why do people keep seeking gifts whose dangers they recognise?
36. 142c-142d Does later regret show that the original desire was unreasonable?

## Safe prayer and useful ignorance

*Stephanus references accompany each question; space is left for notes.*

37. 142d-142e      How does blaming the gods obscure responsibility for our own suffering?
38. 142e-143a      What does the poet leave to Zeus to decide?
39. 143a      Why ask the god to refuse some of the very things we pray for?
40. 143a-143b      Why does Alcibiades find ignorance more dangerous after this prayer?
41. 143b      When does a prayer become indistinguishable from a curse?
42. 143b-143c      Why does Socrates resist condemning ignorance without qualification?
43. 143c      What would show that ignorance can benefit someone?
44. 143c-143d      Why does Alcibiades object to even mentioning the deeds of Orestes?
45. 143d-143e      Is ignorance of what is best always an evil?
46. 143e-144a      Why make Pericles the target in the imagined example?
47. 144a-144b      How could failing to recognise someone prevent a wicked action?
48. 144b-144c      Does beneficial ignorance make its possessor a better person?

## Expertise and good counsel

*Stephanus references accompany each question; space is left for notes.*

49. 144d                      Why might knowledge usually harm a person who lacks wisdom?
50. 144d-144e              Must action begin with knowledge or a belief that one knows?
51. 144e-145a              What does political dependence on advisers require of those advisers?
52. 145a                      What standard separates the few wise people from the foolish many?
53. 145b                      How does knowing when to advise differ from knowing how to advise?
54. 145b                      Why does knowing how long to wage war matter to military wisdom?
55. 145b                      What must be known before punishment can be judged beneficial?
56. 145c                      Is what is best always the same as what is beneficial?
57. 145c                      Can the same wisdom guide a city and a private individual?
58. 145c-145d              What does it mean to know what is best within a particular art?
59. 145d-145e              Why does excellence in an art fail to establish personal wisdom?
60. 145e                      What is missing from a community composed entirely of experts?

## Knowledge needs direction

*Stephanus references accompany each question; space is left for notes.*

61. 145e-146a Who should decide when and towards whom an expert's skills are used?
62. 146a How can professional pride distort a person's political judgement?
63. 146a Must what is best for an art also be best for its practitioner?
64. 146a-146b How might reliance on opinion produce public disorder?
65. 146b-146c What makes an action useful rather than merely well executed?
66. 146c Why does Socrates ask whether Alcibiades still agrees?
67. 146c-146d What supports the claim that most people miss what is best?
68. 146d Is knowing nothing really preferable to acting without wisdom?
69. 146d-146e Does the argument support withholding knowledge or improving education?
70. 146e Why compare the soul's need for knowledge with a patient's need for care?
71. 146e-147a What does the pilot image explain that the physician image does not?
72. 147a-147b How can good fortune magnify the errors of an unguided life?

## Poetry, interpretation, and perplexity

*Stephanus references accompany each question; space is left for notes.*

73. 147a-147b      Why might having many skills leave a person pulled in many directions?
74. 147b      What troubles Alcibiades about the phrase knowing crafts badly?
75. 147b-147c      Why does Socrates claim that poets speak in riddles?
76. 147c      What would motivate a poet to conceal wisdom?
77. 147c      Does calling Homer wise settle how his words should be understood?
78. 147c-147d      How does Socrates' change of wording alter the claim about Margites?
79. 147d      Does the interpretation reveal the poet's meaning or impose an argument?
80. 147d      Why infer poor judgement from knowledge proving harmful?
81. 147e      What makes Alcibiades willing to trust the preceding arguments?
82. 147e-148a      Is Alcibiades' changing mind a failure or a sign of learning?
83. 148a      What has changed when Socrates repeats the imagined divine offer?
84. 148a-148b      Does admitting uncertainty make Alcibiades better prepared to pray?

## Spartan prayer and Athenian display

*Stephanus references accompany each question; space is left for notes.*

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| 85. | 148b      | What sort of wisdom does Socrates attribute to the poet's prayer?        |
| 86. | 148b-148c | Does it matter whether the Spartans learned their prayer from a poet?    |
| 87. | 148c      | Why does the Spartan prayer avoid naming particular achievements?        |
| 88. | 148c      | What distinction might there be between noble things and good things?    |
| 89. | 148c-148d | Does Spartan good fortune establish that their prayer is better?         |
| 90. | 148d      | How does divine freedom complicate judging a prayer by its results?      |
| 91. | 148d-148e | What assumptions lead the Athenians to consult Ammon after defeat?       |
| 92. | 148e-149a | Why do the Athenians emphasise the expense of their religious offerings? |
| 93. | 149a      | What does their complaint about Spartan sacrifices reveal about piety?   |
| 94. | 149b      | How does the oracle challenge the Athenians' account of divine favour?   |
| 95. | 149b-149c | Why does Socrates identify reverent speech with the Spartan prayer?      |
| 96. | 149c      | What could make a prayer ill-omened even if its words sounded devout?    |

## The soul, the gods, and the teacher

*Stephanus references accompany each question; space is left for notes.*

97. 149d-149e What does the rejection of Trojan sacrifices add to the oracle's lesson?
98. 149e Why compare a god swayed by gifts to a base moneylender?
99. 149e-150a What changes when the soul becomes the measure of religious conduct?
100. 150a Why can elaborate ritual fail to reveal a person's moral condition?
101. 150a-150b How are justice and wisdom connected in Socrates' account?
102. 150b Does Alcibiades agree from understanding or from deference to the god?
103. 150c Why does Socrates recommend silence rather than a revised prayer?
104. 150c How does calling Alcibiades high-minded recall the earlier names for folly?
105. 150d What must Alcibiades learn before approaching gods and people rightly?
106. 150d Why does Socrates identify the teacher through his care for Alcibiades?
107. 150d-150e How does the mist over the eyes become an image of the soul's condition?
108. 150e Does readiness to obey a teacher already amount to moral improvement?

## The wreath and the dialogue as a whole

*Stephanus references accompany each question; space is left for notes.*

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| 109. | 151a       | Is postponing the sacrifice an achievement or an unfinished task?         |
| 110. | 151a-151b  | What does crowning Socrates express about Alcibiades' changed priorities? |
| 111. | 151b       | Why does Alcibiades still make the hoped-for day depend on the gods?      |
| 112. | 151b-151c  | What does the image of stormy waves reveal about Socrates' position?      |
| 113. | 151c       | How might the desire to defeat other lovers complicate Socrates' care?    |
| 114. | 138b; 151a | Has the danger raised at the beginning been resolved by the ending?       |
| 115. | 140e; 150b | How has the account of wisdom developed across the dialogue?              |
| 116. | 141b; 151b | How has Alcibiades' understanding of a welcome gift changed?              |
| 117. | 143a; 150c | Why can the poet offer a safe prayer while Alcibiades is told to wait?    |
| 118. | 144c; 146e | How does useful ignorance differ from the knowledge needed to live well?  |
| 119. | 147a; 151c | How does Socrates' final storm compare with the unguided person's storm?  |
| 120. | 150e; 151b | What evidence would show that Alcibiades has begun to become better?      |