

The myth of er essay



The Myth of Er concerns the issue of what happens to us after death. What Socrates is trying to sum up, which he has been mentioning through out the entire book, is that we should all live a wise, strenuous, and philosophical way of life. Socrates' tale is for people from all walks of life, he only wants us to pursue a just way of life. The way it correlates to politics is that he wants people that hold a high status in politics to make sure they are just in the decisions they make for their people, because they will have to pay for it in the afterlife.

The tale is obviously a lie and its only intention is to scare people. The number one way to motivate a large population to listen is through fear, and it's pretty obvious that this myth is just a noble lie. The point of the myth is simply: strike fear into the hearts of people. " For all unjust deeds they had done anyone and all the men to whom they had done injustice, they had paid the penalty for each injustice, ten times over for each. " (Plato P. 298) Having said this, anyone in the pursuit of a just and happy life, in this world and in the next, would interpret this and evade from committing injustices.

And since the reward for doing good deeds is the same, people that are striving for a just life will do their very best to help others. Now that you have people that are in constant fear that once they have committed an injustice they will rot in hell for one thousand years, the crime rate in that area where people believe that, will probably be very low. In conclusion, if you are constantly trying to help others you are probably living a strenuous life due to the fact your trying to keep your family and loved ones happy by working hard.

Also if you're thinking very carefully of your future actions, to make sure your not committing injustices, then you are most likely living a wise and philosophical life. In the end, this is everything that Socrates is trying to promote. This tale goes hand in hand with politics. If a person who holds a high political status and truly believes in this tale, he or she would want his people to follow the moral of the story and strive to become better people. Not only would they impose this among their peoples, they would follow it for themselves.

From the point of view of a politician with great power, it is very easy to take advantage of your peoples and gain resources, wealth, and power for your own benefits. Now if a politician had a firm belief in this tale they wouldn't want a guilty conscience, because he would have to pay ten fold for each sin that he commits. This way the society is based on trust. The citizens of that political system can trust in their political leader to make decisions that will benefit the society. This myth is also aimed at people that are peasants in this society.

For instance, if a peasant decided to live a just life with out committing any crimes, maybe in the next life they will be able to choose a better life. The same goes for someone that holds a high position in society. For instance, one must ask themselves is a lifetime of wealth, prosperity, and power not enough? That is why maybe in the next life they might choose something that is a lot more humble. " For the most part the choice was made according to the habituation of their former life. " (Plato P. 02) What Socrates was really trying to say with this statement is in the next life we should be choosing the better life for ourselves, not the life that is easier or empty. The

only way we can make an educated decision is through wisdom. Hence, that our souls are immortal and knowledge is only recollection. It's a system of false hope and fear. Which leads me to my next point: the contradictions and lies behind the myth. Socrates' main intention by telling this story of life after death was so we can think about the choices we make in this life so it wouldn't effect us in the next life.

The question arises: is there really is a next life? " Then they made their camp.. by the river of Carelessness.. As he drank, each forgot everything. " (Plato P. 303) The blatant truth is that this tale is obviously a noble lie. The inconsistencies in the story are just too many and a lot of things can't be proven because they aren't tangible. In the tale all the souls have to drink from a river to forget everything. How is a soul supposed to keep its wisdom when it loses it every time it starts a new life? According to Socrates the only way we can choose to have a better life is because of our wisdom.

A blank slate with no wisdom cant really make an educated guess as to which life is better if the soul just keeps forgetting every time. Also if Lachesis is sending a guardian with each soul to make sure they live the life that they have chosen, then one can be as philosophical as he wants, but he's not going to break his own fate. In the end, the only scientific explanation as to why Er didn't decompose is because he didn't die. If he didn't die then he never went to the afterlife. Therefore, The Myth Of Er is invalid. Does it help anyone who believes in it? Yes. Hence, that's why it's a noble lie.