

Socrates had many disciples, and the greatest of these was Plato. Plato wrote many books which have come down to us, and it is from these books that we know a great deal of his master, Socrates. Evidently governments do not like people who are always trying to find out things; they do not like the search for truth. The Athenian Government - this was just after the time of Pericles - did not like the method of Socrates, and they held a trial and condemned him to death. They told him that if he promised to give up his discussion with people and changed his ways;

they would let him off. But he refused to do so, and preferred the cup of poison, which brought death, to giving up what he considered his duty. When on the point of death, he addressed his accusers and judges and said:

"If you propose to acquit me on condition that I abandon my search for truth, I will say: 'I thank you, O Athenians, but I will obey God, who, as I believe, set me this task, rather than you; and as long as I have breath and strength I will never cease from my occupation with philosophy. I will continue the practice of accosting whomever I meet and saving to him. 'Are you not ashamed of setting your heart on wealth and honours while you have no care for wisdom and truth and making your soul better?' I know not what death is – it may be a good thing, and I am not afraid of it. But I do know what it is a bad thing to desert one's post, and I prefer what may be good to what I know to be bad."

Questions

1. Why was Socrates condemned to death by his government?
2. On what condition was the government willing to let him go?
3. What was Socrates' reaction to that offer?
4. What did Socrates consider his duty to the people?

① Why was Socrates condemned to death by his government?

The Socrates was condemned to death by his government because he was trying to find the truth whereas governments do not like such efforts. The Athenian Government, therefore, held a trial and condemned him to death.

② On what condition was the government willing to let him go?

The Socrates was condemned to death by his government. The government was willing to let him go on the condition if he promised to give up his discussion with people and changes his ways of finding the truth.

③ What was Socrates reaction to that offer?

Socrates refused the offer of the government that they will let him off if he gives up his ways of finding the truth. He said that he would

not abandon his search for truth as God has set him this task.

④ What did Socrates consider his duty to the people?

Socrates considers his duty to the people to make people understand that wealth and honors are not the things ~~the~~ ^{people that} should be cared about, rather wisdom, truth, and making souls better ~~at~~ should be the objectives of the people.