

All Pleasure Is Desirable, Because It Is Pleasing To Us, But Is All Pleasure *Equally* Desirable?

Post by "Cassius" of May 7, 2018 at 7:11 AM

Pending your response Pivot, let me emphasize that I believe the key to unwrapping this excellent question is "pleasure does not exist in the air apart from things / experiences that we find pleasing." Pleasures do not exist "in the air" waiting for us to come across them and experience them. It seems to me that "pleasure" is the name we give to any number of experiences which our faculty of pleasure at any particular moment tells us is "pleasing" - meaning, our faculty of feeling tells us that this experience is desirable in and of itself.

And because experiences are innumerable in type, the only sense in which "perfect pleasure" exists is when our total experience of feeling, which generally contains some combination of pleasures and pains like jellybeans in a jar (distinct, but taking up place in the jar), contains only pleasurable jelly beans and no painful jelly beans. Now I think this definition of "perfect pleasure" can exist for at least short periods, but viewed in this way "perfect pleasure" is not a single jelly bean of some unusually potent type which can be snatched from the air or otherwise exist in human experience. Human experience is limited to vessels full of pleasures from which all pains have been (temporarily) eliminated.

And again, in my view, the real purpose of this discussion to Epicurus was to illustrate "the" goal, and to show a goal that met Platonic/other objections that pleasure could not be the goal because it can always be increased. When we take into account that a human life is like a vessel / jar, and that it has a definite limit in size which cannot be expanded, then we have a construction of "fullness of pleasure" which serves as a conceptual framework to illustrate our goal for life.

I look forward to continuing this discussion because the issues are so important. Also, I hope we will get others to weigh in on this as soon as they can, as well.