

Peter Abelard and Reconciling Epicurean Philosophy with Christianity through Dialogue

Post by "Cassius" of April 6, 2021 at 6:00 AM

Godfrey I wonder if that statement means that he internalized Epicurean physics, or simply internalized the conclusion of no life after death.

It looks like Erhman has devoted a lot of effort to unwinding Christian / Jewish thought on the afterlife, kind of like Thomas Cooper does in going through his "Scripture doctrine of materialism."

In this context, I think there are a lot of related issues that stem from really understanding the Jewish attitude toward some of these issues (especially on the nature of the soul, afterlife if any). I think a lot of mainline Christians think that their ideas of an eternal soul, afterlife in Heaven, and maybe even in some way rising from the dead to a new life with real bodies, are shared with Judaism, but I gather that that is not true. I have made some effort in the past to get to the bottom of the Jewish viewpoint on that by discussing it with the real Jews of my acquaintance without much success.

Once again, this particular effort and mixed result has confirmed in my mind the imperative to explore these issues as did Epicurus, and be very clear about one's conclusions. You're about to get me started on a tangent that I need to write a separate post about, but I am ready to double down on the viewpoint that there is nothing more important, or even in the neighborhood, of being clear about the nature of the soul being mortal and not subject to supernatural creation or control (the issue really may be "supernatural relation" rather than "supernatural control"). In relation to those issues, the issue of pleasure and Epicurean ethics are strictly secondary, because the propriety of them is entirely dependent on the mortality / supernaturality issues. Anyone who is focused on "pleasure" as the fundamental issue of Epicurean philosophy - I am afraid to say but have to - has missed the boat, the train, the plane, and whole reason for the journey in the first place.