

Joshua's "Only The Beginning" Observation

Post by "Don" of January 10, 2022 at 4:42 PM

[Quote from smoothiekiwi](#)

I'm currently a high school student, as- as strangely as it sounds-, there simply isn't any time left during the week to go out and enjoy the stars.

I certainly respect that fact that the life of a high school student can be hectic! You don't need to add anything else to your schedule.

But, I think, that's one of the points of Epicurus's philosophy. It's about finding pleasure where you are, right now, in the big things but also importantly the little, everyday things. It's the philosophy that could lead Horace to write:

[*Carpe diem!*](#)

which is usually translated as "*Seize the day!*" as if it's a YOLO sentiment. (Is using YOLO still a thing??) It's not that. "Carpe" is more accurately translated as "pluck" or "harvest" because the time is ripe, right now, this day, this moment, to find pleasure. So, you don't have to make time to star gaze (although that can be rewarding in many ways). Notice the way the sun plays through the leaves as you walk to or from school. Feel the sun (when it's warm) on your face. Take pleasure in whatever learning you *can* achieve at school whether in your formal classes or by exploring online or in the library. Begin to notice where you can feel gratitude, too. Epicurus places an emphasis on feeling gratitude, even for little things. (*Confession: I tend to say "Thank you" out loud when the alarm goes off in my car if I still have the keys in the ignition when I open the door. I am grateful for the engineer that decided to put that feature in so I don't lock my keys in my car! I realize it's a little strange for me to do this maybe, but it works for me.*)

You'll see a lot of deep philosophical discussions on this forum and exploration of ancient Greek and Latin texts, etc., and that's great. I take pleasure in all that.

However, for me, Epicurus gave us a practical philosophy, rooted in the everyday experience of human beings, and made it accessible to everyone - otherwise it would not have spread across the ancient world in city after city. At its core, his philosophy is about personal responsibility for actions taken and taking pleasure in the everyday living of our lives.

I'll end with a quote of Epicurus's opening line in his letter to his student Menoikeus:

"Neither must one who is young delay in loving and pursuing wisdom; nor should one who is old grow weary of loving and pursuing wisdom; because it is neither out of season nor untimely for

the health of the mind." It's never out of season, nor too early, nor too late. No one is neither too young nor too old to practice philosophy.

Thank you again for engaging on the forum. You've made some great posts, asked a lot of great questions, and I look forward to reading more from you!