

Joshua's "Only The Beginning" Observation

Post by "Cassius" of January 10, 2022 at 7:20 PM

Smoothiekiwi in addition to what Don wrote above, part of the key is that the Epicurean worldview is not simply a lifestyle choice or a self-improvement technique that people pick up and put down like a diet or an exercise program.

It is an assertion about "the way things are" that takes positions on the nature of human life and the universe that Epicurus asserts to be true regardless of whether an individual chooses to believe it or not.

So someone who learns about what Epicurus taught adds to their knowledge regardless of whether they ever convince many others of its truth, or whether they have time to engage in as many pleasures as they might like. While it is nice to see numbers increase and more people share the view and add to the number of our friends, a large part of the benefit of the philosophy comes no matter how many or how few people accept it.

For example, as explained at the start of Epicurus Book Two:

Quote

SWEET it is, when on the great sea the winds are buffeting the waters, to gaze from the land on another's great struggles; not because it is pleasure or joy that any one should be distressed, but because it is sweet to perceive from what misfortune you yourself are free. Sweet is it too, to behold great contests of war in full array over the plains, when you have no part in the danger. But nothing is more gladdening than to dwell in the calm high places, firmly embattled on the heights by the teaching of the wise, whence you can look down on others, and see them wandering hither and thither, going astray as they seek the way of life, in strife matching their wits or rival claims of birth, struggling night and day by surpassing effort to rise up to the height of power and gain possession of the world.

This might seem sort of unkind, but as explained the emphasis is on the relief from pain that you yourself would be otherwise suffering.