

# New Sedley Chapter On Ancient Greek Atheism

Post by "Cassius" of March 22, 2022 at 7:45 PM

I do my best Pacatus - thank you for the kind words.

Lest anyone think, however, that I am in danger of retiring the helmet, 😊 I should probably clarify and say this:

I've never felt that the "gods" issue is the hill to die on (so to speak) in working toward a reconstituted Epicurean philosophic school. As long as everyone understands that there are no supernatural gods out there creating universes and meddling in human life, that's the great majority of the issue right there. Further, most people don't seem to have a problem in accepting the Epicurean view that there is other life in the universe besides ours, some of which is likely to be higher and some lower than us. That's most of the rest of the way to what Epicurus pretty clearly taught, and whatever is left for dispute doesn't really end up in much different a place whether the "gods" we're talking about literally exist or not.

Unfortunately, I don't expect to ever put the helmet permanently in retirement, because I do think that there will always remain "hills to die on" for the EpicureanFriends project. Those hills are primarily in the lands that border "Stoicism," and in the tendency that some have to want to blend Epicurus with semi-mystical views that are close to Stoicism or even Buddhism. Even in mentioning Stoicism and Buddhism, I know that many of us have been through one or both of those schools, so even those of us who are now the most "fundamentalist" should know from experience that it will always be necessary to be tolerant of people who need time to study and reflect on the differences.

In the end though, we can expect (and this sounds like the discussion of Epicurus and Zeno in chapter seven of AFDIA that we discussed last Sunday) that in the future there will be calls to water down what we're doing here. There will always be a well-intentioned incentive to be more inclusive of those who want to maintain strong positions (Stoic and Buddhist are only two of many) that amount to rejections of core Epicurean views.

I hope to be around a long time to take care of those issues as they arise, but what I would remind everyone in the future is that the purpose of this forum is not to be a general philosophical forum for everyone regardless of viewpoint. There are many other and better places for that. The purpose of the EpicureanFriends forum is to provide a place where those who really are convinced of the prudence of the core Epicurean positions to work together for the continuance of the school. Because I think the core Epicurean view is correct, I see no conflict at all between the goals of continuing to follow Epicurus, the goal of the pursuit of the truth, and the goal of pursuing the best possible life.

But we know that given human nature there are always going to be disagreements about how to define and pursue those goals. We have to be prepared to respect the right and desire of others to go off in different directions, just as we need to work in a friendly but firm way to preserve the path that we've staked out here.