

Epicurean Similarities With Early Christianity

Post by “Kalosyni” of May 29, 2022 at 11:27 AM

[Quote from Nate](#)

“Epicurus is occasionally described as as a saviour (sōtér) or messenger (kéryx), terms which are also used by Epicureans themselves and are reminiscent of Old Testament expressions. Perhaps such a choice of words was intended as a kind of ‘competitive offer’ to the blossoming Christianity.” (*The Cambridge Companion to Epicureanism* 53)

The current understanding of the word "saviour" comes to us by the Christian faith in Jesus being eternal/immortal and all powerful. I would doubt Epicureans felt that way about Epicurus. The word "messenger" implies that the message is coming from God (or the gods), but then maybe there was a different understanding of this word back then. Could it be that back in time there were groups of Christian Epicureans, or groups that converted from Christianity to Epicureanism?

Further thought on prayer (and regarding post # 1 of this thread) -- I have a hard time with the idea that Epicureans prayed to the gods "on purpose". And my understanding of the importance of birthdays in Epicureanism is that this could either take the place of sacrifice to the gods, or as a way to establish a ritual which would focus the minds of Epicureans on mortality and friendship -- hey, we are mortal and only live this one life, so let's honor human lives with birthday celebrations, and also friendship being a reason to celebrate birthdays. Can we really know one way or another?