

"Lucretius on the Divine" - Dr. Christopher Eckerman

Post by "Don" of July 9, 2022 at 11:56 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

1. Do they focus on "Ataraxia" or "Katastematic Pleasure" as the highest good?

I am coming around to the belief that katastematic pleasures, namely ataraxia and aponia, are foundational to a pleasurable life as taught by Epicurus. Epicurus's and other classical Epicureans' numerous uses of words connoting calm, peace, freedom from disturbance, etc. convey to me that without ataraxia and aponia, there's always going to be an impediment to living pleurably, wisely, nobly, and justly. This does ****NOT**** mean numbness or apathy. If I were looking to leadership in any endeavor, I'd want a calm, cool-headed leader, not one who is distracted, anxious, or fearful. If I'm making choices and rejections, I want to be calm, cool-headed, and undisturbed in either body or mind. The "gods" in their blessedness and incorruptible state enjoy this foundational pleasure.

This is all NOT saying that we don't enjoy so-called kinetic pleasures. But Metrodorus implies by the title of his book and the quote from it that we can be more confident in the continuance of the pleasure arising from a calm, undisturbed mind and a healthy, well-functioning body than we can of pleasures arising from external circumstances, objects, and activities. Katastematic and kinetic pleasures can work hand in hand with each other to provide the most pleasurable life, but if you're trying to enjoy a meal with friends while remaining anxious, you're not experiencing the maximum pleasure.

I'll leave that stand for now. I have more thoughts on the gods coming later.