

# Do Pigs Value Katastematic Pleasure? ( Summer 2022 K / K Discussion)

Post by "Cassius" of July 12, 2022 at 8:33 AM

I am glad you reminded me of this section from Lucretius, the opening of book 3. For all the talk we see from the commentators about the intricacy of pleasure analysis, we hardly see any development and dwelling on this issue that after life there is nothing. And that's even among those who say that they know that the soul "consists wholly in the blood" and so these people need nothing else from philosophy on that point. They're just going through the motions, repeating that "[death is nothing to us](#)" but then glazing it over and skipping on to doctrines that they think that they can meld with their pre-existing philosophies.

When the truth is these people are not internalizing the real significance of death, when they should be acting on it with urgency and talking emphatically about how important it is to "make hay while the sun shines."

From book 3:

[31] Since then I have taught what are the first seeds and principles of things, how they differ in their figures, and of themselves fly about, beaten by mutual strokes, and from them all beings are produced, the nature of the Mind and of the Soul comes next to be explained in these my lines, and all the terrors of infernal pains banished, and headlong driven quite away, that from the bottom so disturb the life of man, and cover all things with the gloom of death, and leave no place for pure and unmixed pleasure to possess.

For what men vainly talk, that disease and an infamous life are more to be feared than the terrors of death, and they know that the soul consists wholly in the blood, and therefore they want no assistance from our philosophy, I would have you observe that those boasts are thrown out more for the sake of praise and popular breath (if their vanity by chance leads that way) than that they believe any such thing; for let these very men be banished from their country, and driven into a desert far from human sight, stained with the guilt of the foulest crimes, yet they live on, afflicted as they are, with all sorts of misery, and wherever the wretches come, they fall a-sacrificing, and slay black cattle, and offer victims to the infernal gods, and in this deplorable state they, with more than common zeal, apply themselves to the offices of religion.

And therefore it is proper to view men rather under a doubtful fortune, and observe how they behave in circumstances of distress, for then they speak truth from the bottom of their hearts, the mask is pulled off, and the real man shows undisguised.

[59] Besides, covetousness and the blind desire of honors, which compel unhappy men to exceed the bounds of right, and urge on the partners and assistants of their crimes to strive

day and night with the utmost pains to arrive at the height of wealth: these plagues of life are chiefly nourished by fear of death; for infamy, and contempt, and sharp want seem far removed from a sweet and pure state of life, and, as it were, hover about the gates of death; and wherefore will men, possessed by a false fear, labour to avoid, and stand at the remotest distance from them, they add to their heaps by civil war, and, insatiable as they are, double their riches, heaping one murder upon another. They laugh with cruel delight at the sad funeral of a brother, and hate and fear the entertainments of their nearest relations.

[74] From the same cause and from the same fear, envy often becomes the tormentor of mankind; they complain that one is raised to power before their eyes, another to respect, a third distinguished by shining honors, whilst they lie buried in obscurity, and are trod upon like dirt, and so they pine themselves to death for the sake of statues and a name; and some men, from a fear of death, conceive so great a hatred for life, and the preservation of their being, that in a gloomy fit they become their own executioners; not considering that this fear of death is the source of all their cares, this breaks through all shame, dissolves the bonds of friendship, and in short overturns the foundations of all goodness; for some we see betray their country and their dear parents, striving by that means to deliver themselves from death, and the pains of Hell.

For as boys tremble, and fear every thing in the dark night, so we, in open day, fear things as vain and little to be feared, as those that children quake at in the dark, and fancy advancing towards them. This terror of the mind, this darkness then, not the sun's beams, nor the bright rays of day can scatter, but the light of Nature and the rules of reason.

[94]First then, I say, the mind of man (which we commonly call the soul) in which is placed the conduct and government of life, is part of man no less than the hand, the foot, the eyes, are parts of the whole animal;