

Keen Reasoning Based on the Evidence of the Senses

Post by "Pacatus" of November 28, 2022 at 7:23 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

I think you're saying this yourself and therefore you won't take offense to note that this kind of approach is just totally beyond the reach of the "average man" who has need of guidance for living today - in the moment - and who will never be able to appreciate half of where you are coming from.

There is a segment of people who are into such calculations as you are discussing who will take the position: "Well the masses will never understand what I am talking about so they just need to listen to ME! 😊" That's an attitude that I think well describes most "priestly classes."

Agreed entirely!

[Quote from Cassius](#)

So that leads back to the question of how to understand and appreciate Epicurus' perspective on this, which was apparently understood by the people of his time to be a combination of skeptical questioning of all claims of authority combined with a common sense attitude that certain decisions do have to be made with confidence, and that we do the best we can to make the best decisions we can without holding ourselves up to unrealistic expectations. What I perceive, and what I think Epicurus was also perceiving and saying, is that the pendulum can swing too far in the direction of skepticism leading to nihilism, and that it is necessary to articulate a common sense and usable approach to knowledge formation which allows for happy living.

And with this as well!

[Quote from Cassius](#)

So that seems to me to be the direction that these discussions need to proceed. By all means we take the input from all of the complicated abstractions to which we can gain access and on which we can draw upon, but that in the end we articulate an understandable technique for trusting the senses and making the everyday decisions with confidence that allow us to live happily -- rather than take the position of a Socrates and play games with the idea that we know nothing except that we know

nothing.

Yes.

With regard to the Lucretius quote (and with the hope that [Don](#) might help with translations), I think maybe we would be well advised (today) to replace "certainty" with "reliance." What can we -- must we -- rely upon? And that, I think, Epicurus nailed (and, again, something that I suspect Sextus just misunderstood).