

Epicureans and the Ancient Greek Gods (Imagery of "Gods" / "Gods Among Men")

Post by "Cassius" of February 14, 2019 at 7:11 AM

Ok I am feeling a little better and just read the most recent posts. I don't think any of us think that many of the details of the stories of the gods acting childishly are relevant or useful, other than maybe at most in the way that various stories in the Bible (David / Bathsheba?) add depth to the full story.

But it does seem clear to me that

(1) Epicurus thought that healthy aspirational images of living deathlessly and pleasurably and without pain can come from the gods, regardless of whether we today want to consider those images as emanating from real beings or from anticipatory constructs of the mind.

(2) Mental pictures of a type which represent actual attainable examples of living that sort of highest life are useful and necessary not only to children, but to adults, for many reasons, not the least of which is so that we can communicate intelligibly about what we consider to be the highest sort of life available to humans.

Epicurus through Lucretius said that without a model the gods could not have created worlds, and I think it is safe to say that without a model it is not possible to visualize, work for, or obtain the highest Epicurean life.

That as much as anything is what I object to about the modern obsession with "absence of pain" - it is a disembodied ghost - an unattainable abstraction no more intelligible than the "trinity."