

Confidence in Katastematic Pleasure

Post by "Cassius" of February 11, 2023 at 5:52 AM

On looking up examples of damage that comes from loose construction, (which Don is surely avoiding, I know) I happened to look again at this from Wikipedia on the T. Take a look at the last sentence in this paragraph:

What is terrible is easy to endure

The Epicureans understood that, in nature, illness and pain is not suffered for very long, for pain and suffering is either "brief or chronic ... either mild or intense, but discomfort that is both chronic and intense is very unusual; so there is no need to be concerned about the prospect of suffering." Like "What is good is easy to get," recognizing one's physical and mental limit and one's threshold of pain — understanding how much pain the body or mind can endure — and maintaining confidence that pleasure only follows pain (and the avoidance of anxiety about the length of pain), is the remedy against prolonged suffering.^[13]

The "REMEDY"? Or as people are fond of saying "the CURE"? I think Epicurus would say "No"! The remedy or the cure of a disease is to root it out and destroy it. What is being described here in 3 and 4 are "coping mechanisms" which are certainly desirable but in no way a "cure." I am surely in favor of aspirin, but aspirin does not really cure the source of the pain at least in most cases. The "cure" of these pains is not in thinking about them as short or mild, the cure comes in "curing" them, and to the extent that the phrasing of 3 and 4 suggests that Epicurus would suggest "coping" rather than "curing" this is extremely damaging to Epicurean theory.

I am not so down on 1 and 2 as I am on 3 and 4, but in sum the total effect of these is to more aptly deserve the name the "Four-Part Coping Mechanism" than the Four-Part "cure."

This is just the kind of diversion from proper focus that undue emphasis on the word "katastematic" creates in the minds of those who do not understand that "katastematic" (to the extent it has a clear definition stated by Epicurus at all) is simply one among many pleasures - and one that does not rate even the clear emphasis Epicurus gave to friendship and prudence as of special importance.