

Did Epicurus really oversell the power of science to diminish anxiety?

Post by "Cassius" of February 15, 2023 at 12:02 PM

It's an interesting question as to when one would become a martyr for one's beliefs. Apparently Socrates thought the answer was clear, but my understanding has always been that he was doing so "for the sake of his country" or something like that. Maybe that's the same thing, but it has never been clear to me why he couldn't have made a more practical analysis of all the costs and benefits, and even if he thought his personal example was so important to the world, just gone somewhere else to continue to make it. Plus I gathered he had all these afterlife considerations.

I am not sure at all what Epicurus would have done if he thought he was about to be hauled up on blasphemy charges. Might he not have simply said "OK, guys, have it your way - I will go continue my teaching in Samos or Lampsacus or where-ever. You can believe what you want to believe here in Athens - I may die for my friends, but no spot of ground is worth my dying over?"