

Odyssey's example of a drug for mental pains

Post by "Kalosyni" of March 30, 2023 at 10:47 AM

In last night's Zoom meeting, we discussed this Homeric tale (of a drug which removes all pain and suffering), and a question came up about no longer needing friends. This morning I was researching something else, and happened upon this (which is only the abstract):

Quote

Are Friends and Friendship Worthwhile to the Advanced Epicurean?

Commentators usually understand the Epicureans to take friends and friendship to be worthwhile because they help us to eliminate and/or manage our bodily and/or mental pains and thus come closer to achieving tranquility. However, this understanding leaves unexplained why friends and friendship might be worthwhile to an advanced Epicurean with few or no pains to manage or eliminate. In this paper, I remedy this deficiency by offering three explanations for why friends and friendship could and maybe would remain worthwhile even to the Epicurean who achieves tranquility. Along the way, I explore some problems with each explanation and consider ways to overcome them. Notwithstanding these problems, I conclude that friends and friendship could and perhaps would be worthwhile even to the Epicurean with few or no pains.

<https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/1...05/html?lang=de>

Now this article excerpt also goes to show the depth of misunderstanding of the philosophy. The correct understanding is to think about how Epicureans aim to live as blissfully as the gods. Do the ancient gods sit alone in quietude? No, they are always sitting or dancing blissfully together in a long and enjoyable feast. So they need people, and they need friends.

And thinking further, try this experiment: For several days consider whether or not a human being can actually eradicate all suffering. Is it possible? Especially we all must face the challenges of earning a living. So work is probably one of those arenas in which we need to make careful "choices and avoidances" but even then there will be challenges.

Now a hypothetical...Let's say you are living a serene life of retirement and living in a nice environment with everything you need. There will still be "small pebbles of life disturbing the tranquil pond" of your psyche - this is what it is to be alive. But with wisdom we learn to not

<http://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2987-odyssey-s-example-of-a-drug-for-mental-pains/?postID=23296#post23296>

"freak out" about things.

So only the gods live a perfectly serene existence without pain or suffering.