

Explaining In Summary Form How A Man In Extreme Pain Can Be Said To Be "Happy"

Post by "Cassius" of April 20, 2024 at 1:51 PM

Here are several points that demand to be addressed in any summary of "E-happiness." (I think I will use E-happiness for a while to stand in for whatever the concept is that as Epicurus spoke of it. Is Cicero correct, here in section 27 of book two, that Epicurus would agree that :

1. That E-happiness is entirely within the wise man's own control? "E-happiness, if only it exists at all, ought to lie entirely within the wise man's own control"?

2. That E-happiness is something that we have no cause for worry about losing? "For if the life of happiness may cease to be so, then it cannot be really happy. Who indeed has any faith that a thing which is perishable and fleeting will in his own case always continue solid and strong? But he who feels no confidence in the permanence of the blessings he possesses, must needs apprehend that he will some time or other be wretched, if he loses them. Now no one can be happy while in alarm about his most important possessions; no one then can possibly be happy"

3. That E-happiness is something permanent? "For happiness is usually spoken of not with reference to some period of time, but to permanence, nor do we talk of the life of happiness at all, unless that life be rounded off and complete, nor can a man be happy at one time, and wretched at another; since any man who judges that he can become wretched will never be happy. For when happiness has been once entered on, it is as durable as wisdom herself, who is the creator of the life of happiness,

4. That it is not something which we need wait to assess after the person has died? "nor does it await the last days of life, as Herodotus writes that Solon enjoined upon Croesus.:

Quote

XXVII. But we dwell too long upon very simple matters. When we have once concluded and demonstrated that if every- thing is judged by the standard of pleasure, no room is left for either virtues or friendships, there is nothing besides on which- we need greatly insist. And yet, lest it should be thought that any passage is left without reply, I will now also say a few words in answer to the remainder of your speech. Well then, whereas the whole importance of philosophy lies in its bearing on happiness, and it is from a desire for happiness alone that men have devoted themselves to this pursuit, and whereas some place happiness in one thing, some in another, while you place it in pleasure, and similarly on the other side all wretchedness you place in pain, let us first examine the nature of happiness as you conceive it. Now you will grant me this, I

suppose, that happiness, if only it exists at all, ought to lie entirely within the wise man's own control. For if the life of happiness may cease to be so, then it cannot be really happy. Who indeed has any faith that a thing which is perishable and fleeting will in his own case always continue solid and strong? But he who feels no confidence in the permanence of the blessings he possesses, must needs apprehend that he will some time or other be wretched, if he loses them. Now no one can be happy while in alarm about his most important possessions; no one then can possibly be happy. For happiness is usually spoken of not with reference to some period of time, but to permanence, nor do we talk of the life of happiness at all, unless that life be rounded off and complete, nor can a man be happy at one time, and wretched at another; since any man who judges that he can become wretched will never be happy. For when happiness has been once entered on, it is as durable as wisdom herself, who is the creator of the life of happiness, nor does it await the last days of life, as Herodotus writes that Solon enjoined upon Croesus.

Relating this to what Diogenes of Oinanda and Torquatus said, in equating a life of happiness to a life of pleasure, we have all sorts of reference to a life of happiness being a life of PLEASURE, including:

Cicero, quoted from above: "Well then, whereas the whole importance of philosophy lies in its bearing on happiness, and it is from a desire for happiness alone that men have devoted themselves to this pursuit, and whereas some place happiness in one thing, some in another, while you place it in pleasure, and similarly on the other side all wretchedness you place in pain, let us first examine the nature of happiness as you conceive it."

Torquatus at Book 1:54 (XVI)

RACKHAM - If then even the glory of the Virtues, on which all the other philosophers love to expatiate so eloquently, has in the last resort no meaning unless it be based on pleasure, whereas pleasure is the only thing that is intrinsically attractive and alluring, it cannot be doubted that pleasure is the one supreme and final Good and that ***a life of happiness is nothing else than a life of pleasure.***

REID: But if the encomium passed even on the virtues themselves, over which the eloquence of all other philosophers especially runs riot, can find no vent unless it be referred to pleasure, and pleasure is the only thing which invites us to the pursuit of itself, and attracts us by reason of its own nature, then there can be no doubt that of all things good it is the supreme and ultimate good, and that ***a life of happiness means nothing else but a life attended by pleasure*** .

Diogenes of Oinoanda Fr. 32 ... [the latter] being as malicious as the former. I shall discuss folly shortly, the virtues and pleasure now. If, gentlemen, the point at issue between these people and us involved inquiry into «what is the means of happiness?» and they wanted to say

«the virtues» (which would actually be true), it would be unnecessary to take any other step than to agree with them about this, without more ado. **But since, as I say, the issue is not «what is the means of happiness?» but «what is happiness and what is the ultimate goal of our nature?»**, I say both now and always, shouting out loudly to all Greeks and non-Greeks, **that pleasure is the end of the best mode of life, while the virtues**, which are inopportunately messed about by these people (being transferred from the place of the means to that of the end), are in no way an end, but the means to the end. Let us therefore now state that this is true, making it our starting-point.