

# Episode 238 - Cicero's OTNOTG 13 - Velleius Erupts Against Stoic Fate and Supernatural God-Making

Post by "Cassius" of July 23, 2024 at 11:57 AM

Here is at least one parallel passage, Lucretius Book 5, around 55:

## Quote

[55] In his footsteps I tread, and while I follow his reasonings and set out in my discourse, by what law all things are created, and how they must needs abide by it, nor can they break through the firm ordinances of their being, even as first of all the nature of the mind has been found to be formed and created above other things with a body that has birth, and to be unable to endure unharmed through the long ages, but it is images that are wont in sleep to deceive the mind, when we seem to behold one whom life has left;

for what remains, the train of my reasoning has now brought me to this point, that I must give account how the world is made of mortal body and also came to birth; and in what ways that gathering of matter established earth, sky, sea, stars, sun, and the ball of the moon; then what living creatures sprang from the earth, and which have never been born at any time; and in what manner the race of men began to use ever-varying speech one to another by naming things; and in what ways that fear of the gods found its way into their breasts, which throughout the circle of the world keeps revered shrines, lakes, groves, altars, and images of the gods.

Moreover, I will unfold by what power nature, the helmsman, steers the courses of the sun and the wanderings of the moon; lest by chance we should think that they of their own will 'twixt earth and sky fulfil their courses from year to year, with kindly favour to the increase of earth's fruits and living creatures, or should suppose that they roll on by any forethought of the gods.

For those who have learnt aright that the gods lead a life free from care, yet if from time to time they wonder by what means all things can be carried on, above all among those things which are descried above our heads in the coasts of heaven, are borne back again into the old beliefs of religion, and adopt stern overlords, whom in their misery they believe have all power, knowing not what can be and what cannot, yea and in what way each thing has its power limited, and its deep-set boundary-stone.