

November 2024 General Thoughts On What Epicurean Philosophy Means To Me.

Post by “Cassius” of November 29, 2024 at 11:25 AM

(I decided to post this on Facebook and Twitter just to keep up Epicurean conversation over there. There's nothing new here that we don't frequently discuss on the forum, but I'll post it anyway as another formulation of what we often discuss.)

I see the teachings of Epicurus as coming down mostly to this:

Whether you like it or not, and regardless of what anyone tells you, the following things are true:

1. There are no supernatural gods or forces.
2. Nature has no absolute standards of right and wrong to which you must conform.
3. Some things that will happen to you in your life will happen by chance, some will happen by choice, and some will happen by necessity.
4. While some things happen by necessity, there is in Nature no force which has the power to force you to think and act in a particular way.
5. Nature gives you only the feelings of pleasure and pain by which to determine what to choose and what to avoid.
6. If you are wise you will consider Pleasure to include everything in life that is agreeable to you, and Pain to include everything in life that is disagreeable to you.
7. All too soon you will be too old to do the things that you can do when you are young.
8. All too soon you will die and forever after cease to exist.
9. At death your consciousness will come to an end, and you will then never again have any consciousness or experience anything whatsoever.
10. After death there will be no reward and no punishment for what you do in life.
11. At the end of your life the only opinion that matters as to how you spent your time is your own.
12. The question you must confront every moment of your life is: Given these truths about the way things are, how do you want to spend the time that is available to you?