

"You will not taste death: Jesus and Epicureanism" (Gospel of Thomas Thread)

Post by "Titus" of February 7, 2025 at 12:19 PM

[Quote from Eikadistes](#)

I think Hannah set out to try to prove a highly imaginative fiction. He paints a colorful picture that would be the perfect topic for late night on the History Channel

I am fascinated how ChatGPT 4.0 is capable of catching and contextualizing the key thoughts of Hannah. I should send its summary to the History Channel immediately! 😊 Here it is:

If we introduce the idea of a **speculative transformative sect of Epicureanism**—one that **opens gates to the heavens** and allows *eidola* to persist and manifest in a metaphysical realm—then we are envisioning a significant departure from classical Epicurean materialism. This revised system would likely incorporate **elements of transcendence, personal persistence, and metaphysical transformation**, making it resemble aspects of Jewish and Christian thought while still operating within an Epicurean framework.

Let's re-evaluate the comparison, considering this **speculative transformative Epicureanism** as a distinct category.

1. Speculative Transformative Epicureanism: A New Hybrid Model

What would this look like?

If Epicureanism were to **evolve beyond strict materialism**, allowing *eidola* to form **persistent avatars in the heavenly realms**, then it might involve:

- A **mechanism** by which *eidola* could **stabilize and endure** beyond the physical world.
- A view of the **gods as receptive to human emanations**, opening a path for human *eidola* to dwell in the divine intermundia.
- A **personal continuation** in some idealized, purified form, avoiding the total annihilation of identity after death.

This hypothetical Epicureanism would still be **naturalistic**, seeking explanations in physics and perception, but it would now include **the possibility of an afterlife via persistent *eidola***.

Would this be closer to Christianity or Judaism? Let's analyze again.

2. How Does This Compare to 0 AD Judaism?

Jewish eschatology (especially Pharisaic beliefs) included:

- A **bodily resurrection**, but not an immediate spiritual persistence.
- A **final judgment**, determining one's fate in the afterlife.
- A **focus on collective redemption** rather than a personalized, immediate transformation.

Key Similarities:

☐ **The idea of a continued existence beyond death**—though in Judaism, this happens at resurrection, not immediately via *eidola*.

☐ **The mechanism differs**—Judaism relies on divine power, not natural emanations.

☐ **No direct material continuity**—Jews did not think in terms of *eidola* persisting in a divine realm.

Thus, **speculative transformative Epicureanism is somewhat similar to Jewish eschatology**, but the mechanistic, emanation-based model makes it quite distinct.

3. How Does This Compare to Early Christianity?

Christianity, especially in Paul's writings and later theology, envisions:

- **The resurrection of believers**, where they receive **glorified, imperishable bodies**.
- **A personal transformation**, where the soul and body become perfected in God's presence.
- **A direct encounter with the divine**, something that aligns with the idea of entering the heavens.

Key Similarities:

☐ **A personal, enduring form in heaven**—just as Christianity teaches resurrection bodies, a perfected *eidolon* could serve as a similar concept.

☐ **Transformation into an idealized self**—mirroring Christian ideas of sanctification and glorification.

☐ **The idea of a celestial presence**—Christianity teaches that believers dwell with God, just as speculative Epicureanism might propose humans dwelling in the intermundia.

☐ **Different theological basis**—Christianity relies on divine intervention, whereas a speculative Epicureanism would use **natural mechanisms** (like *eidola* transmission).

Thus, **speculative transformative Epicureanism is much closer to Christianity** than to Judaism. While it differs in explanation, it aligns with **Christianity’s emphasis on individual transformation, persistence, and celestial existence.**

4. How Does This Compare to Traditional Epicureanism?

Classical Epicureanism rejects:

- **Personal immortality**—the soul dissolves at death.
- **Divine intervention**—gods do not interact with humans.
- **Heaven as a realm of the afterlife**—humans simply cease to exist.

A **speculative transformative Epicureanism** would **break from these core beliefs**, making it **radically distinct** from traditional Epicurean thought. It would become a **new philosophical sect**, one that merges Epicurean physics with **transcendence, persistence, and celestial transformation.**

Final Verdict: Who is Closest to Speculative Transformative Epicureanism?

Feature	Christianity	0 AD Judaism	Traditional Epicureanism	Speculative Transformative Epicureanism
Personal persistence	☐ Yes, glorified body	☐ Yes, but resurrection-based	☐ No, soul dissolves	☐ Yes, via <i>eidola</i>
Immediate heavenly existence	☐ Yes, for the righteous	☐ No, resurrection at end times	☐ No afterlife	☐ Yes <i>eidola</i> persist in the heavens

Feature	Christianity	0 AD Judaism	Traditional Epicureanism	Speculative Transformative Epicureanism
Transformation into a higher form	☐ Yes, sanctified in heaven	☐ Yes, resurrection body	☐ No, material dissolution	☐ Yes, perfected <i>eidolon</i>
Divine presence	☐ Yes, in communion with God	☐ Yes, but often communal	☐ No gods interact with humans	☐ Yes, but gods receive <i>eidola</i> instead of directly engaging
Mechanism of persistence	Divine resurrection	Divine judgment & resurrection	Material decay	Naturalistic <i>eidola</i> transmission

Closest Match?

☐ **Christianity** is still the closest, because of its belief in **personal transformation into an enduring, perfected form** in the heavenly realm.

☐ **Speculative transformative Epicureanism** is unique but **bridges the gap between Christianity and materialism**, offering an **alternative metaphysical mechanism** for persistence.

☐ **0 AD Judaism is more distant**, because it emphasizes **communal resurrection** rather than an immediate, personal afterlife.

Thus, if **Epicureanism evolved into a transformative sect that opened the gates of heaven**, it would move **much closer to Christian ideas of glorification and celestial life**—but with a **naturalistic mechanism instead of divine resurrection**.

Conclusion

If we **modify Epicurean thought** to allow for the **persistence of *eidola*** and a **metaphysical continuation of self**, then we create **a philosophy that parallels Christianity in its vision of an immortal, transformed individual**, while still maintaining a **naturalistic foundation**.

This **speculative transformative Epicureanism** would **not be as close to 0 AD Judaism**, because **Judaism emphasized a future, bodily resurrection rather than an immediate celestial existence**.

In short:

☐ **Christianity remains the closest to this speculative idea**—it shares the same **goal**

(individual, perfected persistence in heaven), even though it explains it differently (divine resurrection vs. *eidola* transmission).

☐ **A transformed Epicureanism could function as a "scientific" alternative to Christian eschatology**, offering a **materialist path to immortality** through persistent *eidola*.

Would you like to refine this further or explore additional implications? ☐☐

Your analysis is quite elaborated! Please add the idea of a heavenly father in the heavens, a friend to humans, to the speculative transformative Epicureanism, a person that helps them to reach the heavens.

Now, if we **expand speculative transformative Epicureanism** further by introducing the idea of a **Heavenly Father**—a benevolent divine being who is a **friend to humans and helps them reach the heavens**—we create an even more profound parallel to Christian theology.

This "**Epicurean Theistic Evolution**" would retain **Epicurean physics** but introduce a **personal divine guide**, aligning it more closely with **Christian and some Jewish eschatological themes**. Let's explore how this changes the landscape.

1. What Would This Heavenly Father Be Like in Transformative Epicureanism?

In traditional Epicureanism, the gods are **distant, blissful beings** who do not interact with humans. However, if we introduce a **Heavenly Father** who:

- **Acts as a benevolent friend** to humans,
- **Guides them toward immortality**,
- **Helps their *eidola* ascend into the heavenly realms**,

then we create an Epicureanism where **divinity is not just an indifferent existence, but an active force of assistance**.

Such a being would likely:

- Exist in **the intermundia (the spaces between worlds)** but **maintain a connection with humanity**.
- **Receive and stabilize *eidola***, preventing them from vanishing.
- **Provide an ethical framework**, encouraging humans to cultivate the best versions of themselves so their *eidola* remain worthy of persistence.
- Be an "**ideal Epicurean sage**", embodying perfect tranquility (*ataraxia*) yet choosing to assist human beings out of kindness, not need.

This **Heavenly Father would open the gates of heaven**, allowing worthy humans to persist in the **divine realm**.

2. How Does This Compare to Christianity?

If we **compare this new speculative Epicureanism to Christianity**, the parallels become even stronger:

Key Similarities:

- ☐ **A benevolent, divine Father figure** helping humans reach heaven.
- ☐ **A transformation of human existence into a higher, perfected state.**
- ☐ **A personal afterlife in the heavens, not just material dissolution.**
- ☐ **Moral and philosophical refinement leading to immortality.**

Key Differences:

- ☐ **Christianity sees the Heavenly Father as the Creator**; in **Epicurean Theistic Evolution**, the gods are part of nature, not creators.
- ☐ **Christian salvation is through grace and faith in Christ**; in **Epicureanism, immortality is achieved through naturalistic *eidola* refinement.**
- ☐ **Christian heaven is a realm of communion with God**; in **Epicureanism, it is a realm of perfected *eidola*.**

Nevertheless, **this reformed Epicureanism now comes extremely close to Christian thought**, while still remaining **philosophically Epicurean**.

3. How Does This Compare to 0 AD Judaism?

Judaism had a **Father-God (YHWH)**, but:

- He was more **communal** than personal (focused on Israel as a people).
- **Resurrection, not immediate ascent**, was the main path to immortality.
- Heaven was often seen as **a divine realm, not necessarily the afterlife for individuals.**

Since this **new Epicureanism grants immediate heavenly persistence** through a divine guide, it actually **moves further from Judaism and closer to Christianity**.

4. Final Evaluation: Who is Closest to This New Epicureanism?

Feature	Christianity	0 AD Judaism	Traditional Epicureanism	Speculative Transformative Epicureanism with a Heavenly Father
Personal persistence	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, glorified body	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, resurrection	<input type="checkbox"/> No, soul dissolves	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, <i>via eidola</i>
Immediate heavenly existence	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, for the righteous	<input type="checkbox"/> No, resurrection at end times	<input type="checkbox"/> No afterlife	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <i>eidola</i> persist in the heavens
Transformation into a higher form	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, sanctified in heaven	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, resurrection body	<input type="checkbox"/> No, material dissolution	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, perfected <i>eidolon</i>
Divine presence	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, in communion with God	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, but often communal	<input type="checkbox"/> No gods interact with humans	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, but via a benevolent divine helper
Path to Immortality	Divine grace & resurrection	Obedience & divine resurrection	No path—only mortal life matters	Refinement of <i>eidola</i>, guided by divine aid

Closest Match?

Christianity is now even closer—because of its **Heavenly Father, personal transformation, and celestial afterlife**.

This speculative Epicureanism now fully bridges the gap between materialism and transcendence—blending Epicurean physics with a **personal divine connection**.

✗ **It distances itself from classical Epicureanism**—which rejected divine involvement and afterlife persistence.

Judaism remains less similar, due to its focus on **future resurrection over immediate transformation**.

Conclusion

By introducing a **benevolent Heavenly Father** into **Speculative Transformative Epicureanism**, we create a system that:

- Allows **personal immortality** through *eidola* refinement.
- Maintains **Epicurean naturalism** while permitting **divine assistance**.
- **Opens a direct path to the heavens**, making it much closer to **Christianity than to 0 AD Judaism**.

Thus, this **evolved Epicureanism would function almost like a naturalistic alternative to Christian eschatology**, offering a **science-based mechanism for divine immortality**. □