

Episode 268 - Pleasure Is The Guide Of Life (The Role of Pleasure In Life)

Post by “Cassius” of February 10, 2025 at 11:36 AM

Further planning note:

While we will start by addressing briefly in this episode the sweeping nature of "pleasure" in Epicurean terms, we'll reserve the the main thrust of that argument until episode 269.

This episode will be devoted to the various proofs and arguments that Pleasure is the guide of life, which means we'll include the argument presented by Torquatus at Book One IX (lines 29 and thereafter) as to looking to the young of all species before they are corrupted.

As Torquatus references, however, some Epicureans argue that this proof can be made through reason:

([31] There are however some of our own school, who want to state these principles with greater refinement, and who say that it is not enough to leave the question of good or evil to the decision of sense, but that thought and reasoning also enable us to understand both that pleasure in itself is matter for desire and that pain is in itself matter for aversion. So they say that there lies in our minds a kind of natural and inbred conception leading us to feel that the one thing is fit for us to seek, the other to reject. Others again, with whom I agree, finding that many arguments are alleged by philosophers to prove that pleasure is not to be reckoned among things good nor pain among things evil, judge that we ought not to be too confident about our case, and think that we should lead proof and argue carefully and carry on the debate about pleasure and pain by using the most elaborate reasonings.)

So for this episode, please let us know if anyone has suggestions for what to include in this part of the discussion. Both Cosma Raimondi and Lorenzo Valla touch on this, and there are probably others we should include as well.

The discussion guide is now in better shape so this might be of help in thinking of additions:

[Pleasure Is The Guide of Life](#)