

Episode 270 - Life Is Desirable, But Unlimited Time Contains No Greater Pleasure Than Limited Time

Post by "Godfrey" of February 23, 2025 at 1:01 AM

I'm catching up on this thread and probably missed a lot, but, at least for me, the title to this thread refers to another shibboleth, and the "answer" is quite simple. (Apologies if I missed this elsewhere in the thread, or if I'm stating the obvious.) My interpretation is based on the following:

[PD09](#): *If every pleasure were condensed and were present at the same time and in the whole of one's nature or its primary parts, then the pleasures would never differ from one another.* (Saint-Andre translation)

Which I read as a confirmation by Epicurus that pleasures have three components: intensity (condensed to the same intensity is how I read this translation of the PD; someone please correct me if the Greek contradicts this), duration, and location in the body/mind. With this in mind, duration is pertinent to consider in evaluating pleasure, along with intensity and location. Pleasures are typically not of the same intensity, duration and/or location, and so they differ from one another in one's experience, even though they are all "pleasure".

[PD19](#): *Finite time and infinite time contain the same amount of joy, if its limits are measured out through reasoning.* (Saint-Andre)

The only thing that makes this statement even remotely confusing or controversial is the worldview that one bases their reasoning on. In a worldview where life is finite, infinite time does nobody any good. A life is finite, therefore the pleasure possible in that life is finite. Infinite time is irrelevant to a person's life. This is an extremely simple, practical statement and in no way contradicts [PD09](#). In fact, it defines another limit to pleasure in response to Plato. This complements [PD03](#): *The limit of enjoyment is the removal of all pains. Wherever and for however long pleasure is present, there is neither bodily pain nor mental distress.* (St-Andre) [PD03](#) and [PD09](#) describe pleasure within a person's lifetime, [PD19](#) compares a life of pleasure to a myth of immortality.

Of course, Cicero and his ilk would never accept such a simple idea as this, as it negates the supernatural and destroys much of their power over other citizens. So they do what they do best: obfuscate, obfuscate, obfuscate.