

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

Post by “Don” of February 23, 2025 at 6:27 AM

Εἰ κατεπυκνοῦτο πᾶσα ἡδονή, καὶ χρόνῳ καὶ περὶ ὅλον τὸ ἄθροισμα ὑπῆρχεν ἢ τὰ κυριώτατα μέρη τῆς φύσεως, οὐκ ἄν ποτε διέφερον ἀλλήλων αἱ ἡδοναί.

Εἰ κατεπυκνοῦτο πᾶσα ἡδονή > "If every pleasure could be condensed"

κατεπυκνοῦτο is an interesting choice.

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, A Greek-English Lexicon, Κκ , καταπτερ-όω , καταπυκν-όω](#)

The connotation includes "to stud thickly" or to plant closely together or stars packed together in the sky. Hence, it also means "to force into a small compass, compress, condense." It's almost like saying "If all the stars in the sky could be condensed..." Or "If all the plants in the field could be condensed..."

If every pleasure could be condensed in both body or mind, pleasures would never differ from one another.

Epicurus Wiki has a good commentary:

## Quote

Epicurus presents here a logical defense for his belief that the various pleasures are in an important sense independent: if, he hypothesizes, all pleasures could be somehow "condensed", so that their sum total could be experienced all at the same time, then one pleasure would not differ from any other. Yet the pleasures do differ, Epicurus implies, since they cannot be thus condensed -- another syllogism by negative hypothesis, demonstrating that the opposite is in fact true.

The clause *e ta kyriotata...* is somewhat confusing; the disjunctive preposition it begins with does not stand amidst a clear, either/or construction. The logically most plausible reading is that this clause is disjunctive to the earlier holon, meaning that, hypothetically at least, all pleasures could be condensed and thus be experienced by the "entire" human, sentient being, or (alternatively) by the "principal parts of his/her nature". The confusion stems from the (perhaps deliberate) parallel construction, by which the sum total of pleasures is related to the sum total of the sentient human.