

The Absence of Sin

Post by “Rolf” of April 21, 2025 at 4:45 PM

As a result of Cassius' friendly encouragement, I've decided to post this publicly, along with a tongue-in-cheek title. 😊

Something I really appreciate about Epicurean philosophy is that there is no concept of sin. I don't necessarily mean the concept of religious sin - I was not raised religious - but the idea of falling short of some ideal. With other philosophies of life I've tried on, I always feel this shame or guilt whenever I miss the mark. Maybe I indulged too much in worldly desire and clinging (Buddhism) or allowed my emotions rather than virtue guide me (Stoicism). But with Epicureanism, I haven't "sinned" if I do something that results in more pain than pleasure. It's a learning process. Sometimes I drink too heavily on a night out and feel hungover the next day, and realise that I would've been better off drinking more moderately. But it's not some kind of stain on my soul. Life can be messy and Epicurus, from what I understand, gets this. There's nothing inherently despicable about living a life filled with pain, it's just misguided and unnecessary.