

Epicurus And The Pontius Pilate Question: "What Is Truth?" Does Epicurean Canonics Support "Objective Truth"?

Post by "Don" of June 27, 2025 at 11:17 PM

Quote from Epicurus, Letter to Herodotus

[51] "For the presentations which, e.g., are received in a picture or arise in dreams, or from any other form of apprehension by the mind or by the other criteria of truth, would never have resembled what we call the real and true things, had it not been for certain actual things of the kind with which we come in contact. Error would not have occurred, if we had not experienced some other movement in ourselves, conjoined with, but distinct from, the perception of what is presented. And from this movement, if it be not confirmed or be contradicted, falsehood results ; while, if it be confirmed or not contradicted, truth results. [52] "And to this view we must closely adhere, if we are not to repudiate the criteria founded on the clear evidence of sense, nor again to throw all these things into confusion by maintaining falsehood as if it were truth.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

A test of "truth" cannot and I would say therefore does not mean a test of "absolute" or "true for everyone" truth...Absolute Platonic idealist truth does not exist and it is a false standard to act as if it does.

While I agree "idealist truth" doesn't exist in the form of some Platonic ideal, truth as in the truth of existing things does exist. I would call that objective truth. The difference is "Is it true pigs exist?" Vs "Is it true that ice cream tastes good?" The first is the objective truth Epicurus was concerned with in using his Criteria. The second is subjective and contextual. If one starts questioning the truth of the existence of pigs, one rapidly devolves into a Socratic nightmare: "What do you mean by a 'pig'?" To my understanding, Epicurus stands on it being true that there is an objective reality with which we interact with our sensations.

From my perspective, those last two posts from [Patrikios](#) and [Cassius](#) blur the line between the objective truth conveyed by reality to us through our senses and canonic faculties and the relative "truth" of subjective opinions and concepts derived from the objective truth of reality.