

Marriage & children seem less pleasurable today: financial worry, relational problems, high rates of divorce. Are they worth the pain (tarakhē τάραχή) they entail?

Post by "Elli" of July 6, 2026 at 2:38 PM

It is striking to observe how someone can speak of prudence while repeating the very error Aristotle made when he claimed that women have fewer teeth than men - without ever opening a single mouth to count. He preferred abstraction to reality, assumption to experience, theory to observation. And here, the same gesture reappears: a man theorizing about marriage, children, and prudence without ever examining the living substance of Epicurean philosophy.

He speaks of marriage as a contract of business, reducing an ancient institution of joy, pleasure, and friendship into a commodity for the marketplace. He has not yet understood that this reduction is one of the primary causes of unhappy marriages: two spouses locked in separate rooms, each counting money in a private chest, each guarding his own fear of death instead of sharing a real pleasant life. When marriage becomes an accounting exercise, joy evaporates, friendship collapses, and the household turns into a pair of isolated treasuries. This is not prudence; it is moral decline - the quiet erosion of *philia* under the weight of economic suspicion. It is the collapse of friendship into accounting, the transformation of human intimacy into a spreadsheet, the replacement of shared life with Excel morality, where the only virtue is the balance of columns. 😞

He speaks of children as liabilities, of prudence as financial foresight, as if human bonds were items on a balance sheet. He measures children by the cost of their upbringing, failing to see that the cost of being alone is the one price he is actually paying. Two private anxieties are elevated into universal laws, as though the entire human condition must conform to the architecture of his fear. This is not prudence; it is projection disguised as philosophy.

Epicurus teaches that prudence and pleasure are inseparable - two movements of the same soul. He separates them. Epicurus teaches that friendship is the highest security - the foundation of a life free from fear. He replaces it with economic caution. Epicurus teaches that desires must be measured by the pleasure and disturbance they bring - not by their cost of money. He measures them by risk and liability. What emerges is not Epicurean prudence but Aristotelian household economics, where human beings are evaluated as units of production and reproduction. 😞

And just as Aristotle never counted the teeth, he never counted the pleasures, the friendships, or the disturbances born from fear itself. He counted only the coins. And a man who counts only

coins will always conclude that life is too expensive. 😞

Epicurus did not build the Garden on contracts, pledges, or liabilities. He built it on friendship, mutual care, shared burdens, and the courage to live pleasantly. Prudence is not the art of avoiding life; it is the art of choosing the life that frees one from fear.

Anyone who wishes to speak of prudence must first open the mouth of the philosophy he invokes - and count its teeth. Otherwise, he remains a prisoner of his own projections, mistaking the ledger for the landscape, merely theorizing about human nature without ever looking at the human beings in front of him. 😞