

# The Neglect of Metrodorus' Economics

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LIV and LV are difficult columns:

“. . . so that there is almost no bodily suffering. Even if **wealth** cures, it is not permitted to say that it [**wealth**] is a great thing. Insofar as it is also easily destroyed and perfectly subject to being taken away, **wealth** does not permit . . .” (ὥσθ' ὅσον οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλγημα κἂν [θ]εραπεύη(ι) πλοῦτος, οὐκ ἔ[ξ]εστιν αὐτὸ<sup>17</sup> μέγα λέγειν· ἐπεὶ καὶ καθ' ὅσον [εὐ]φθαρτός ἐσ[τι] καὶ [τελ]έως εὐαφαίρετος ὁ [πλ]οῦτος οὐκ [ἐ]πιτρέπει . . . ; LIV.4–10)

“The fact that the sources of **wealth** are easily destroyed hinders in perfect or even worthy pleasure. For it is not possible, in view of such considerations, to make (pleasure) excessive. Therefore, not great . . .” (. . . πρὸς δὲ τελείαν ἡδονὴν ἢ καὶ ἀξιόλογον ἐμποδίζει τὸ τὰ ποητικά<sup>18</sup> εὐφθαρτα εἶναι· [σ]φοδρὰν γὰρ ο[ὐ] δύν[α]ται παρασκ[ευάζειν τοι]αῦτ' ἐννοοῦ[με]να· [δι]όπερ οὐδὲ μέγала . . . ; LV.4–14).

“But reason in this situation and henceforth brings the same pleasures from poverty as those from **wealth**, so that it [poverty] becomes a matter of indifference . . .” ([. . . ὁ μὲν] λό[γος κατὰ] τοῦτο κα[ὶ] κατὰ τὸ λοιπὸν ἐκ τῆς πενίας τὰς ἴσ[α]ς] ἡδονὰς κομίζεται τὰς ἐκ πλούτου ὥστ' εἰς ἀδιαφορίαν καθί(σ)τασθαι . . . ; LVI.2–9)

“If we are poor, nor even if we are rich shall we think with pride of such non-things for this reason, nor shall we betray our souls by desire for **wealth** . . .” (ἐὰν ὦμεν πένητες, οὐδ' ἂν πλουτῶμεν ὑπερφρονήσομεν χάριν τούτου [τῶ]ν μὴ τοιούτων, οὐδ' ἐκ[δ]οθησόμεθα τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπὸ τῆς [ἐ]πιθυμίας τῆς π[ρ]ὸς πλοῦτον . . . ; LVIII.3–9)

“We shall admire the discoveries of treasures and the arrangements of livelihoods, but we shall admire the philosophy that prepares for such

Is it "poverty" that is a matter of indifference, or "wealth" -- we don't know as the word is in brackets!