

Characteristics of the Wise Man, 1-9 Rough Draft of Outline

Post by "Cassius" of May 31, 2020 at 6:46 AM

This is one of the few texts I can think of that refers to a superlative experience of pleasure ("jubilation unsurpassed"):

Plutarch, *That Epicurus actually makes a pleasant life impossible*, 7, p. 1091A: Not only is the basis that they assume for the pleasurable life untrustworthy and insecure, it is quite trivial and paltry as well, inasmuch as their "thing delighted" – their good – is an escape from ills, and they say that they can conceive of no other, and indeed that our nature has no place at all in which to put its good except the place left when its evil is expelled. ... Epicurus too makes a similar statement to the effect that the good is a thing that arises out of your very escape from evil and from your memory and reflection and gratitude that this has happened to you. His words are these: "That which produces a jubilation unsurpassed is the nature of good, if you apply your mind rightly and then stand firm and do not stroll about {a jibe at the Peripatetics}, prating meaninglessly about the good."

Now would it be desirable to live every moment of life experiencing "jubilation unsurpassed"? I think so, and I think this example does stand for the ability to rank some pleasures as more pleasing than others. And it may be there there is no "legitimate" "absolute" standard by which you can say that one pleasure is more pleasing than another other than saying. "I feel this pleasure is more pleasing to me than that one, or those."

But there's a lot to consider about these points.

It "might" be true, but would also be very important to flesh out and explain, that it is a core Epicurean principle that:

There there is no standard by which you can say that one pleasure is "objectively" more pleasing than another, for all people at all times, and from any "absolute" perspective. The only proper way of comparing pleasures is from the perspective. "I feel this pleasure is more pleasing to me than that pleasure."

Would that be correct?