

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

Post by "Don" of May 31, 2020 at 7:42 PM

[Cassius](#) wrote:

Quote

I suspect that in this discussion so far everyone will largely agree that the answer to that question is "yes, there is no absolute justice" - but probably not without hesitation.

I'll admit I have hesitation when it comes to not having an absolute standard of justice. I consider something like equality for all genders and races to be universal. Can I justify this on Epicurean grounds? Maybe. Epicurus didn't see a problem with having women and slaves be an active part of the Epicurean community. The "standard" of neither harmed or be harmed comes into play arguably, too. But Epicurus did own slaves. Isn't slavery a universal injustice? Doesn't it do harm to those enslaved. Epicurus freed at least some of his slaves in his will, so he must have seen the value in setting them free. But are we going to argue that slavery was just when it was practiced in Ancient Greece? But not just in 19th century America? We have [PD38](#) to refer to:

Quote

...actions which were considered just have been shown not to accord with the general concept, in actual practice, then they are not just.

Is slavery "not to accord with the general concept"? Is gender equality "not to accord with the general concept"? If so, are these universals? If not, why not?

I agree that this subject is not easy. But if we are to call ourselves Epicureans, we need to wrestle with it. If we can't come to grips with what we believe Epicurus is saying, then maybe we're not Epicureans but rather humanists or atheists or agnostics or something else. If I want to call myself something, I have to understand what that means. If I can't defend or follow a path, I need to step off that path and find another. I admit I'm willing to look at what it means to call myself an Epicurean right now. If I find I can't agree or defend an Epicurean perspective, I'll find another path. BUT I think it's important to discuss and argue these fundamental points. It will either strengthen my Epicurean resolve or demonstrate to myself that I'm maybe not an Epicurean after all. This opportunity to talk through these issues is truly one of the values in finding this forum.