

PD24 - Commentary and Translation of PD 24

Post by "Cassius" of September 3, 2020 at 9:23 AM

What are our takeaways from this?

I would say first and most easily obvious he is saying that we should pay attention to all our faculties and the information that they provide to us (presumably because they are reported honestly and in this sense are "true"). That's probably pretty noncontroversial, except maybe if someone pursues the non-Epicurean reasoning that the senses are never to be trusted and should simply be ignored in favor of pure dialectical reasoning.

The deeper parts include:

- (1) That the data from the "mental presentations" / anticipations" and also the feelings of pleasure and pain are entitled to equal consideration with the data from the five senses.
- (2) That we should "wait" and hold open as at least potentially "true" all theories which have support from some data from some combination of the three faculties, and
- (3) That we should be careful not to select from among the unrefuted possibilities any favorite or pet theory to hold as the only "true" possibility so long as other possibilities remain viable.

All of this is also presumably the foundation of affirming that "truth" comes to us through these three faculties and not from any other way which is NOT based on these three faculties (i.e. divine revelation, totally abstract logic / rationalism)

I would say one of the most continuously difficult parts is that of separating (1) instances of data provided by the "mental presentations/anticipations" from (2) conceptual reasoning, in which concepts are formed after a lot of thought and deliberation and reasoning. I continue to think that if we were to equate "mental presentations/anticipations" with "concepts" we would be confusing two distinct things (the process vs the result) into a single thing (the concept which the result of thinking) and we'd have a feedback loop which would introduce rationalism into the canon and would be why that Epicurus himself only had THREE legs, but the "other Epicureans (in my view mistakenly) came up with four.