

Scientism, Atheism, And The Admissibility Of Spiritual Experience

Post by "Susan Hill" of November 2, 2020 at 4:53 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

I'll admit I was being deliberately provocative with "doing it wrong."

So, from what I'm reading there in your post, [Cassius](#) (and correct me!):

You're not discounting the idea that humans have experiences for which they feel they can only describe using culturally-derived religious or spiritual language.

These experiences can be personally profound and potentially life-changing.

However...

If the experiences are still tied to or interpreted through "empty opinions" they have the potential to reinforce negative religious activities or perspectives.

These "empty opinions" would include:

- an eternal soul existing independently of the body
- an eternal soul susceptible to eternal reward or punishment
- a creator god outside of the cosmos
- the ability to propitiate the gods by prayer or sacrifice

My question would be then: Can Epicurus's teachings provide an alternate framework within which to interpret these real experiences without denigrating or belittling the person who experiences them? These experiences seem to me to be part of the way humans would come into contact with the meaning of the quote of Epicurus: "θεοὶ μὲν γὰρ εἶσιν." Literally, "On the one hand, gods exist (or there are gods)" [but not as the hoi polloi believe]

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Yes! 😊 Where do I sign?