

Glossary - What Is the Epicurean Definition of "Gods"?

Post by "Cassius" of January 14, 2020 at 7:57 AM

Thread for discussion of the [FAQ Answer located here](#).

The main discussion forum for this topic is here:

[Nature Has No Gods Over Her - Epicurean Divinity, Piety, and the Question of "Religion"](#)

Post by "Hiram" of January 14, 2020 at 8:50 AM

How comprehensive are you wanting these entries to be? 😊 because, as you know, not only are there more views on this among modern epicureans than what Epicurus thought about the gods, but the gods are also more complex and described in more detail.

For instance the first PD says that they neither experience favor / gratitude nor hostility/violence against mortals because that would imply weakness. This is a huge statement.

Favor and hostility go together. They are tied to the belief that the gods enjoy Autarchy, that they are completely self sufficient and so no one can harm or help them. And the scroll on Piety has much more to say about the gods and about religiosity.

Post by "Cassius" of January 14, 2020 at 9:03 AM

I think in terms of the glossary that the basic point is to get people straight that we are not talking about supernatural gods that create universes, control things, etc., and then we can point them to the more detailed discussions that have all the details you are talking about.

I am thinking that the initial hurdle is getting people to hang around long enough to begin to understand Epicurus on his own terms, and so it's a delicate balance on how much to put in an

initial FAQ and how much to leave out.

I'm thinking it makes sense for the FAQ to be manageably short, and then at some point in the future maybe put "I have read the FAQ" as a condition of posting here.

We already have lots and lots of discussion of this issue so I am thinking that accumulating the links here in these explanatory threads, with perhaps a short description of what is in each link, makes the most sense. But I agree that it does make sense too to incorporate some of the core texts in the FAQ.

Maybe the best theory of the FAQ would be something like: "Telling people enough about the basics to let them recognize that the term has a special meaning so they need to suspend judgment until they have had time to read more and absorb it."