

Nate's Personal Outline

Post by “Eikadistes” of November 27, 2023 at 5:04 PM

I included my Personal Outline in the Foreword of the First Edition of The Hedonicon, but I wanted to share it here, as well:

ETHIKON (ethics) — HEDONISM (“ἩΔΟΝΗΝ ΕΙΝΑΙ ΤΕΛΟΣ” X.11) “Pleasure is the Goal...”

PHYSIKON (physics) — ATOMISM (“ΤΟ ΠΑΝ ΕΣΤΙ ΣΩΜΑΤΑ ΚΑΙ ΚΕΝΟΝ” X.47) “The universe is bodies and void...”

KANONIKON (canonics) — SENSUALISM (“ΤΗΣ ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑΣ ΕΙΝΑΙ ΤΑΣ ΑΙΣΘΗΣΕΙΣ” X.31) “The truth is the sensations...”

Epicurus teaches that an unceasing study of nature (ΦΥΣΙΟΛΟΓΙΑΣ or *physiologías*) is integral to achieving the ultimate goal (ΤΕΛΟΣ or *télos*) of sustaining an existence that is both blessed (ΜΑΚΑΡΙΟΣ or *makarios*) and incorruptible (ΑΦΘΑΡΤΟΣ or *aphthartós*). His teachings aim to dispel the universal fear (ΦΟΒΟΣ or *phóbos*) of death (ΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ or *thanatos*) by empowering each of us to secure a pleasant life (ΒΙΟΣ or *orbíos*) without the troubles (ΠΡΑΓΜΑΤΑ or *pragmata*) of excessive anger (ΟΡΓΗ or *orgē*), confusion (ΤΑΡΑΧΗ or *tarakhē*), sickness (or), and sadness (ΛΥΠΟΥΜΕΝΟΝ or *lypóúmenon*); he hopes for joy (ΧΑΡΑ or *khara*) and good cheer (ΕΥΦΡΟΣΥΝΗ or *eúphrosúnē*). The *Patron of Pleasure* prescribes a practice for maximizing the serenity (ΑΠΟΝΙΑ or *aponía*) of the flesh (ΣΑΡΞ or *sarx*) and for magnifying the tranquility (ΑΤΑΡΑΞΙΑ or *ataraxía*) of the mind (ΔΙΑΝΟΙΑΣ or *dianoias*).

Epicurus teaches that “Truth” (ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑ or *Alētheia*) is a true belief (ΔΟΞΑ or *dóxa*) about the nature (ΦΥΣΙΣ or *phúsis*) of “The All” (ΤΟ ΠΑΝ or *to pan*) or “the universe”. He rationalizes that we live in an infinite void (ΚΕΝΟΣ or *kenós*) containing a boundless (ΑΠΕΙΡΟΣ or *âpeiros*) plethora of imperishable particles (ΑΤΟΜΟΙ or *atomoí*) that forever fall through the eternal heavens (ΟΥΡΑΝΟΥ or *óúranou*) endlessly enlacing to form innumerable worlds (ΚΟΣΜΟΙ or *kósmoi*) and countless creatures (ΖΩΩΝ or *zōiōn*). He recognizes a universal standard (ΚΑΝΩΝ or *kanōn*) of truth that includes [1] Sensations (ΑΙΣΘΗΣΙΣ or *aísthēsis*), [2] Impressions (ΠΡΟΛΕΠΣΙΣ or *prólēpsis*), and the criterion of [3] Feeling (ΠΑΘΗ or *pathē*) that discerns *The Good* (ΤΑΓΑΘΩΝ or *Tagathōn*) of pleasure from the evil (ΚΑΚΩΝ or *kakōn*) of pain (ΑΛΓΟΣ or *algos*).

Epicurus teaches a philosophy (ΦΙΛΟΣΟΦΙΑ or *philosophía*) that exercises frank criticism (ΠΑΡΡΗΣΙΑ or *parrhesía*) and prioritizes natural (ΦΥΣΙΚΑΙ or *phusikai*) and

necessary (ΑΝΑΓΚΑΙΑΙ or *anankaiai*) desires (ΕΠΙΘΥΜΙΩΝ or *epithymiôn*) above vain beliefs (ΚΕΝΗΝ ΔΟΞΑΝ or *kenên dóxas*) based upon comparative analysis (ΣΥΜΜΕΤΡΗΣΙΣ or *symmétrēsis*). He contends that the virtues (ΑΡΕΤΑΙ or *aretai*), including *self-sufficiency* (ΑΥΤΑΡΚΕΙΑ or *aûtärkeia*), *security* (ΑΣΦΑΛΕΙΑ or *asphaleia*), *honor* (ΚΑΛΩΣ or *kalôs*), *courage* (ΘΑΡΡΕΙΝ or *tharreîn*), and *prudence* (ΦΡΟΝΗΣΙΣ or *phronēsis*) are *instrumental* to a life of happiness (ΕΥΔΑΙΜΟΝΙΑ or *eudaimonía*), for without virtue, there can be no pleasure. *Tranquility* is the greatest product of *justice* (ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣ or *dikaïos*) and *security* is the greatest product of *friendship* (ΦΙΛΙΑ or *philía*, the greatest pleasure).

Epicurus teaches that the spiritual practices of gratitude (ΕΥΧΑΡΙΣΤΙΑ or *eukharistía*), faith (ΠΙΣΤΙΣ or *pístis*), and piety (ΟΣΙΟΤΗΤΟΣ or *hosiótētos*) provide psychological value to the mortal soul (ΨΥΧΗ or *psykhē*). He insists upon the remembrance (ΜΝΗΜΗ or *mnēmē*) that the soul dies with the body; we *only* live *once*; no one is *given* life to *own*; we all hold but a *lease*. The future is neither ours, nor is it wholly *not* ours, thus, we should neither count on it with despotic certainty, nor abandon hope for it out of spite. Epicurus encourages us to embrace the belief that a god (ΘΕΟΣ or *theós*) has better things to do than stage the petty human drama. The divine nature (ΘΕΙΑ ΦΥΣΙΣ or *theía phúsis*), being sublime (ΥΨΗΛΟΝ or *hypsēlon*), marvelous (ΑΦΡΑΣΤΟΝ or *aphraston*), dignified (ΣΕΜΝΟΤΑΤΟΝ or *semnótaton*), and blameless (ΙΛΕΩΝ or *híl eôn*) would never be burdened with the responsibilities of reviewing prayers (ΕΥΧΑΙ or *eukhai*) and distributing pain, nor trouble itself to supervise the wind, nor bother to regulate the rain, nor suffer the sting of an endless string of cries and complaints.

No deity is needed to know the nature of things, only the subtle science that observes the stirrings of the swerving (ΠΑΡΕΓΚΛΙΤΙΚΕΝ or *parenklitikên*) firstlings, the primal seeds of substance, the basic, begetting bodies, those *smallest, oldest, fastest, strongest* motes of matter.