

# Episode 318 - TD44 - In the End It Is Pleasure - Not Virtue - That Gives Meaning To A Happy Life

**Post by "Cassius" of January 24, 2026 at 2:18 PM**

Welcome to Episode 318 of Lucretius Today. This is a podcast dedicated to the poet Lucretius, who wrote "On The Nature of Things," the most complete presentation of Epicurean philosophy left to us from the ancient world. Each week we walk you through the Epicurean texts, and we discuss how Epicurean philosophy can apply to you today. If you find the Epicurean worldview attractive, we invite you to join us in the study of Epicurus at [EpicureanFriends.com](http://EpicureanFriends.com), where we discuss this and all of our podcast episodes.

We are closing in on the end of those portions of Tusculan Disputations that are most relevant to Epicurean philosophy today, so we'll pick up this week with [Section 34 of Part 5](#).

Cicero spends the next several sections trying to chip away at pleasure being the goal of life by discussing how luxury, honor, and riches are not required for happiness. He does so generically without direct mention of Epicurus, but we'll discuss his examples and how his argument actually proves Epicurus' point that pleasure is the goal: those who overindulge obtain do not *in sum* obtain pleasure, but in fact more pain than pleasure.

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**Post by "Cassius" of January 25, 2026 at 4:00 PM**

Today we completed recording our final episode of the Tusculan Disputations series. It will be posted later this week.

Beginning next week we will be starting a new series. We have lots of material we'd like to cover, but at present I think we need to turn our attention to Canonics and eventually to Philodemus' "On Signs" / "On Methods of Inference." When we do that, we will refer to David Sedley's article on "On Signs," and the appendix in the translation prepared by Philip Lacey, both of which are very good.

However that's going to be very difficult material, and we have the serious problem that the remaining text from Philodemus start in the middle. We therefore don't have Philodemus' own

explanation of the issues, and given that the topic is so unfamiliar to most of us it is hard to tell what positions belong to what parties in the remaining text.

For that reason I think we need a little more Cicero. Cicero proved very helpful in understanding Epicurean views of divinity in "On the Nature of the Gods" and Epicurean views of ethics in "On Ends" and "Tusculan Disputations."

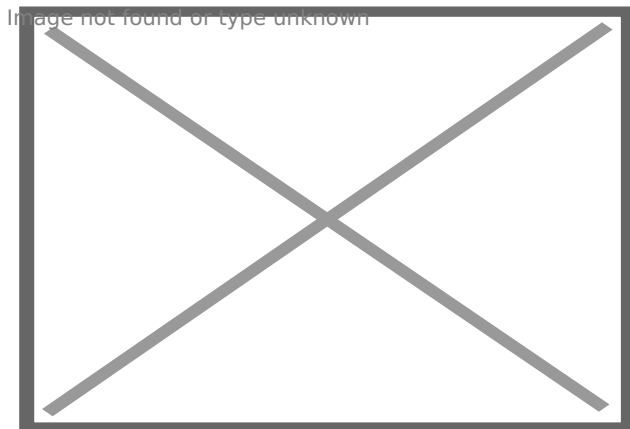
Likewise, Cicero provides an overview of issues involving Canonics/Skepticism in his work "Academic Questions," which also incorporates discussion of Epicurus. AQ is not nearly as long as On Ends or Tusculan Disputations, but it will give us an overview of the issues that split Plato's Academy and how Aristotle and the Stoics (and Epicurus) responded to those controversies.

Once we get that overview we'll be prepared to tackle Philodemus and get a deeper explanation of the Epicurean view.

I'll set out some notes over the coming week and we'll get set up for this next text. The title is off-putting but it is really very interesting, and the depth of the subject is well suited to the detailed review that we can provide over the podcast - so long as Joshua can find relevant color commentary!

[Cicero - Academic Questions - Yonge](#)

We'll likely stick with Yonge primarily, but we'll also refer to the Rackam translation here:



[Cicero On Nature Of Gods Academica Loeb Rackham : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive](#)

Cicero - On The Nature of The Gods - Academica  
archive.org

## **Post by “Cassius” of January 31, 2026 at 8:30 AM**

Episode 318 of the Lucretius Today Podcast is now available. This week our episode is entitled: "In the End It Is Pleasure - Not Virtue - That Gives Meaning To A Happy Life."

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