

# What Did Epicurus Say About "Gods?" Was Epicurus an "atheist?"

**Post by "Cassius" of November 24, 2018 at 8:28 AM**

Was Epicurus an "atheist?" What did Epicurus say about "gods?"

Additional discussion of this topic is in the thread below. See also the subforum devoted to this topic here: [The Nature \(Non-Existence\) of Supernatural Gods - "Atheism" - Epicurean "Divinity"](#)

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**Post by "Hiram" of November 25, 2018 at 1:35 PM**

According to Philodemus, no.

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**Post by "Cassius" of November 25, 2018 at 4:33 PM**

Thanks Hiram -- I intend to link in response to this question some of our earlier discussions. For the time being I have just set these questions up first and will come back to them as time permits.

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**Post by "Cassius" of April 16, 2019 at 8:38 AM**

I know that we are missing numbers of links here to prior discussions about "gods." I will add more as I find them and I invite others to do the same, as people who read the FAQ and follow the link there will find this thread.

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**Post by "michelepinto" of April 16, 2019 at 10:39 AM**

Epicurus believed that the gods did not interfere with the lives of men.

For Epicurus the gods are perfectly happy beings. Epicurus invited his disciples to venerate the gods to imitate their happiness.

I believe that every religion carries with it a part of "wisdom" and that Epicurus does not want to reject religion in its entirety, preferring to save the little good that is in it.

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### **Post by "Cassius" of April 16, 2019 at 10:59 AM**

Michele since you are an Italian and presumably very in tune with Lucretius 😊 --- how do you interpret the references to Venus in the opening of Book 1 of his poem?

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### **Post by "michelepinto" of April 16, 2019 at 11:07 AM**

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Michele since you are an Italian and presumably very in tune with Lucretius 😊

Lol! 😊

[Quote from Cassius](#)

How do you interpret the references to Venus in the opening of Book 1 of his poem?

I don't have enough studies for my opinion to be authoritative. I make a simple hypothesis:

Venus is the goddess of love. Lucretius wanted to open his book with an ode to Love.

It is quite common that a deity is mentioned to understand what it represents.

For example: I love Bacchus = I am a drunkard.

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### **Post by "Godfrey" of April 16, 2019 at 7:54 PM**

Can anybody recommend some material on the Greek gods? I'm a little familiar with the stories of anger, chicanery and such. It would be interesting to have references to peruse that deal with such things as:

- stories of the Greek gods
- Greek gods versus Greek myths: are the myths just stories of the gods?
- the place of the gods in Greek culture, especially during Epicurus's time

It might be helpful to see more specifically what the general thinking was that Epicurus was responding to. If so, maybe this subforum is a good place to gather references.

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**Post by "Cassius" of April 16, 2019 at 8:04 PM**

That's a great idea and we can pursue it here or in the subforum on "Gods" - [The Nature \(Non-Existence\) of Supernatural Gods - "Atheism" - Epicurean "Divinity"](#)

As for reference works, I see that [Matt](#) posted this thread on Thesiod. I confess I have heard of his work but am not sure whether it is a compendium of material on the gods or what - [Hesiod's Theogony](#)

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**Post by "Cassius" of April 16, 2019 at 8:14 PM**

Godfrey take a look at that site where Hesiod's Theogony is linked. It looks like there are a variety of good free sources on the Greek gods. <https://www.theoi.com/>

Thanks to [Matt](#) or as I shall call him for a while "He Who Changes His Avatar More Frequently Than Anyone Else By Far."

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**Post by "Godfrey" of April 16, 2019 at 8:28 PM**

Great, thanks!

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**Post by “Matt” of April 16, 2019 at 9:16 PM**

Yep! The Theogony is a pretty solid ancient resource for the Greek deities.

[Cassius](#) , that’s the beauty of *avatara*, I remain the same, yet each incarnation is different. ?