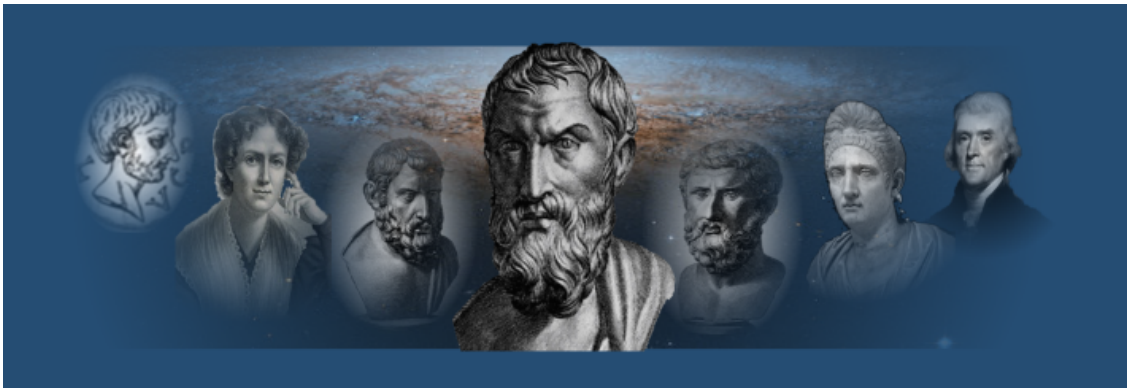


EpicureanFriends Wiki

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1. About Us

Welcome to EpicureanFriends, where we are dedicated to the study and promotion of the philosophy of Epicurus. This wiki is a work-in-progress, so if you don't find something you need, please check our list of [frequently asked questions](#) or [ask in the forums](#).

EpicureanFriends was established in 2015 by a group of friends interested in the study of [Classical Epicurean Philosophy](#), freed from the intrusion of contemporary politics, Stoicism, Platonism, Humanism, Buddhism, Judeo-Christianism, Minimalism, and other "isms" with which many seek to combine it. EpicureanFriends.com welcomes all who are sincerely interested in Epicurean Philosophy to read our public forums and make use of our public resources. We are, however, an explicitly pro-Epicurean forum, and our goal is to construct a community of those who are supportive of [Classical Epicurean Philosophy](#). For that reason, full posting and participation privileges are reserved only to those who agree to our [Terms of Use](#) and our [Community Standards and Posting Policies Page](#).

A major aspect of these community rules is that we prohibit the discussion of contemporary partisan political issues in our activities. The goal of EpicureanFriends is to focus identifying and understanding Epicurean

philosophical doctrine, and we exclude all discussion of contemporary partisan politics, leaving such matters solely to our participants' personal discretion. This is not because we accept the contention of detractors that Epicurus taught extreme versions of "living unknown" or avoidance of "all" political action, but because our priority is a healthy community dedicated to Epicurean Philosophy, and discussion of divisive political issues would be a major obstacle to that goal.

EpicureanFriends does not encourage eclecticism, and our forums are not the place for extended discussion of non-Epicurean viewpoints. Those who are interested in comparing Epicurus to other viewpoints should review the following section of the forum:

1. [General Discussion of Contrasts Between Epicurus And Other Philosophers](#)
 1. [Contrasting Epicurus With Platonism](#)
 2. [Contrasting Epicurus With Stoicism](#)
 3. [Contrasting Epicurus With Buddhism](#)
 4. [Contrasting Epicurus with Existentialism / Nihilism](#)
 5. [Contrasting Epicurus With Humanism](#)

Please understand that there are many forums on the internet where other philosophies can be discussed and advocated at length. EpicureanFriends.com was founded to promote *Epicurean* philosophy, and we moderate the forum with that goal always in mind. We welcome to the forum all who are sincerely interested in the study of Epicurus and who wish to collaborate with the EpicureanFriends community.

2. The Epicurean Paradigm Shift - What To Watch Out For In Reading Epicurus

We recommend that at the very start of your study of Epicurus you come to grips with Epicurus' use of important philosophical terms in non-standard ways. Epicurus' description of words like "pleasure" was controversial even in his own time, and understanding the reasons for his views on basic terminology is essential to understanding his philosophy as a whole. The remaining works of Epicurus frequently do not explain the non-standard usage, so it is important to investigate this issue before presuming that apparent meanings of passages can be taken at face value by those familiar with twenty-first century usage.

[Classical Epicurean Philosophy](#) is a worldview that rejects many commonplace assumptions of other philosophies, including the prevailing views of "pleasure," "gods," "virtue," and even "good and evil." In Epicurean terms, pleasure embraces much more than sensory stimulation, "gods" exist but are not supernatural, and it is important to act "virtuously," but "virtue" is not desirable as an end in itself, but as a means of obtaining pleasure. Likewise, "Good" and "evil" are not abstract absolutes, but are ultimately evaluations based on sensations of pleasure and pain felt by real living things. "Practical Reason" is held to be essential for living wisely, but "dialectical logic" is rejected as misleading. It is a major goal of EpicureanFriends to explore Epicurean terminology in these and other areas so we can appreciate the philosophy as the ancient Epicureans understood it. For more on terminology and similar topics, [check out our FAQ page](#). We also particularly recommend [Episode 222](#) of the Lucetius Today Podcast where we discuss key terminology issues surrounding "happiness" and "pleasure" and "virtue."

In the ancient world, prevailing philosophic schools refused to accept Epicurus' unconventional viewpoints. As a result, those schools labeled Epicurus as a muddled thinker and an immoral reprobate. Those attitudes prevail even today, but what is more noteworthy is that even many who believe themselves to be Epicurus' friends misinterpret his views, often because they fail to incorporate Epicurus' rejection of conventional views even in such basic subjects as Pleasure.

Just as the rejection of elemental "earth, air, wind, and fire" leads to a revolution in physical science, the rejection of conventional views of the best way to live, the meaning of death, and the nature of gods leads to a revolution in ethics.

For more detail, please see the following slideshow and associated [discussion outline](#).

3. Major Doctrines Of Classical Epicurean Philosophy

In order to clarify the distinctive aspects of [Classical Epicurean Philosophy](#), at EpicureanFriends.com we place special emphasis on a number of the most central aspects of Epicurean doctrine. We include brief comments about each one on [the front page of our website](#). For more detailed explanations and citations, check the links below:

- [*Nothing Can Be Created From Nothing.*](#)
- [*The Universe Is Infinite In Size And Eternal In Time And Has No Gods Over It.*](#)
- [*The Nature of Gods Contains Nothing That Is Inconsistent With Incorruption And Blessedness.*](#)
- [*Death Is Nothing To Us.*](#)
- [*There Is No Necessity To Live Under The Control Of Necessity.*](#)
- [*He Who Says "Nothing Can Be Known" Knows Nothing.*](#)
- [*All Sensations Are "True."*](#)
- [*Virtue Is Not Absolute Or An End In Itself - All Good And Evil Consists In Sensation.*](#)
- [*Pleasure is The Guide of Life.*](#)
- [*By "Pleasure" We Mean All Experience That Is Not Painful*](#)
- [*Life Is Desirable, But Unlimited Time Contains No Greater Pleasure Than Limited Time.*](#)

4. Physics, Canonics, and Ethics

Epicurean philosophy is generally divided into Physics, Canonics, and Ethics, and we organize our forums along similar lines. The following subsections incorporate the eleven areas of focus listed above into the larger context of the field of Epicurean Philosophy where they are found:

1. **Physics** - Epicurus erected his entire philosophy upon his understanding of the nature of the universe, including how it is composed of and governed by elemental particles moving through space. Click here for our Wiki entry on [General Principles of Epicurean Physics](#). Click here for our [Physics](#) discussion forum.
2. **Canonics** - Often known as "epistemology," in Epicurean philosophy canonics is closely related to physics. At the same time that we observe and derive our conclusions about the nature of the universe, we must examine what it means to "know" anything. What is truth? What is real? Is confidence in knowledge (or "certainty") possible? Click [here](#) for our Wiki entry on [General Principles of Epicurean Canonics](#). Click here for our [Canonics](#) discussion forum.
3. **Ethics** - The subject of the best way to live - Ethics - arises from the application of Physics and Canonics. Click [here](#) for our Wiki entry on [General Principles of Epicurean Ethics](#). Click here for our [Ethics](#) discussion forum.

5. History Of The Epicurean School

As Norman Dewitt writes:

Quote from Norman DeWitt - Epicurus and His Philosophy

THIS book attempts to present for the first time a fairly complete account of the life and teachings of Epicurus. At the very outset the reader should be prepared to think of him at one and the same time as the most revered and the most reviled of all founders of thought in the Graeco-Roman world.

His was the only creed that attained to the dimensions of a world philosophy. For the space of more than seven centuries, three before Christ and four afterward, it continued to command the devotion of multitudes of men. It nourished among Greeks and barbarians alike, in Greece, Asia

Minor, Syria, Judaea, Egypt, Italy, Roman Africa, and Gaul. The man himself was revered as an ethical father, a savior, and a god. Men wore his image on finger-rings; they displayed painted portraits of him in their living rooms; the more affluent honored him with likenesses in marble. His handbooks of doctrine were carried about like breviaries; his sayings were esteemed as if oracles and committed to memory as if Articles of Faith. His published letters were cherished as if epistles of an apostle. Pledges were taken to live obedient to his precepts. On the twentieth day of every month his followers assembled to perform solemn rites in honor of his memory, a sort of sacrament.

Throughout these same seven centuries no man was more ceaselessly reviled. At his first appearance as a public teacher he was threatened with the fate of Socrates. In Athens he never dared to offer instruction in a public place but confined himself to his own house and garden. His character and his doctrines became the special target of abuse for each successive school and sect, first for Platonists, next for Stoics, and finally for Christians. His name became an abomination to orthodox Jews. The Christians, though by no means blind to the merit of his ethics, abhorred him for his denial of divine providence and immortality.

- Joshua's [Timeline of Epicureanism From Classical Athens to Late Antiquity](#)
- Twentier's [Timeline of Ancient Epicurean History](#)

6. Frequently Asked Questions

We have a [FAQ](#) to answer many of the questions that normally come up during study. If you find something missing, let us know and we'll see what we can do to add it.

7. Recommended Reading

We always recommend that readers consult the original works of Epicurus, and we maintain here a collection of [Ancient Epicurean Texts](#), including [Diogenes Laertius Book 10](#) (which contains all of Epicurus' Letters), [Lucretius' De Rerum Natura](#), and many others. For people who are brand new to Epicurus, we recommend that you start with the two books we recommend most: [Epicurus and His Philosophy](#) by Norman DeWitt, and [Living For Pleasure: An Epicurean Guide to Life](#) by Emily Austin.

Click [here](#) for our full discussion of [Recommended Reading](#).

8. The Lucretius Today Podcast

In our Lucretius Today podcast we discuss the Epicurean texts in detail each week. Starting with [Episode One](#) in 2020, we went verse by verse through Lucretius' poem. Since then, we have covered many other important Epicurean texts. Episodes of special note include:

- [Lucretius Today Interviews Dr. Emily Austin](#),
- [Letter to Menoeceus](#),
- [The Canon, Reason, and Nature](#),
- [Epicurus and His Philosophy: The New Hedonism](#), and
- [Episode 200](#) (our anniversary episode discussing our past and future plans for the podcast).

We have a page dedicated to a selection of [Quotes](#) used in the podcast. Click [here](#) for our [Episode Guide](#).

9. EpicureanFriends Articles

We curate a number of selected [Articles](#) written by participants at EpicureanFriends which discuss Epicurus from the perspective of [Classical Epicurean Philosophy](#).

10. EpicureanFriends Videos And Youtube Page

We have a selection of useful videos produced over the years. Of special note are our [Seven Steps With Epicurus](#) slideshow and our [Foundations of Epicurean Philosophy](#) presentation.

11. EpicureanFriends Special Resources Page

Our [Special Resources Page](#) provides a variety of informative items prepared by our forum members. Included is our page of [Regional Maps of the Greco-Roman World](#)

12. EpicureanFriends Image Gallery

Our [Images](#) section provides a collection of images, graphics, and memes by EpicureanFriends forum members. A special selection of our [Featured Images is here](#).

13. Personal Outlines of Epicurean Philosophy

As suggested by Epicurus to Herodotus, and as in the example Thomas Jefferson left to us in his personal writings, one of the best ways to internalize Epicurean Philosophy is to write it out in outline form. See our resources here for sample outlines that help you navigate this site, and work with others [who have posted for us their own outlines here](#).

14. Self Study Courses

Currently we have a [Quiz Section](#). In the future we hope to offer you organized programs in the form of an [Epicurean Week](#) and an [Epicurean Seven Week Program](#).

15. Zoom Meetings

Those who register an account and establish a pattern of productive participation will be invited to our First Monday Meet And Greet meeting, which we conduct on the first Monday of each month. Those who continue thereafter to participate productively will eventually be invited to become "Established Members," and to join our Wednesday night Zoom study groups and our monthly Twentieth Meeting, and participate in sections of our discussion forum which are limited to Established Members. If you'd like to know how we conduct our meetings and what to expect, check [here](#).

16. EpicureanFriends Site Map

Our [site map](#) has a listing of all major sections of this site. If you have questions, please feel free to ask any member of our [Moderator Team](#).

Much More To Come!