

Tactical Question for the Group Re Terminology In Discussing Reason and Logic

Post by "Cassius" of January 21, 2021 at 9:20 AM

[Quote from Elayne](#)

When it comes to energy, if you want to make it the same as what Epicurus said, you've either got to classify it as matter OR as void -- it can't work as both in his model.

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In his model I presume that energy would be classified as material

[Quote from Elayne](#)

All that is necessary for the pain and pleasure understanding, pleasure as a goal, is observations of one's self and others.

I agree that that is all that is necessary for some people to be comfortable with the conclusion. Simply pointing to it and observing, as Epicurus said. But not everyone understands the point, and I would say that that is why we have philosophy to help them understand it. Simply pointing has not been sufficient, especially given the corruption of other philosophies and training, so more is required for many people.

[Quote from Elayne](#)

None of the modern physics theories include meddling gods or supernatural realms.

Isn't that the equivalent of saying: "There are no gods because the physics theorists tell me so?" That would be hearsay evidence in court, and admissible only under expert testimony rules, for which there would be conflicting testimony from creationist scientists. Even if you dismiss the creation scientists as inadmissible, you're still left with your conclusion that there is no gods resting on belief in the credibility of the physicists. I interpret Epicurus is saying that the question of this (and life after death) is so personal, and so important, that people seeking happiness through philosophy need a personal method of understanding the point which is not based on hearsay but on observations they can make for themselves. Yes this turns into what is effectively an inference about the unknown based on the known, but that is what Philodemus "On Methods of Inference" (which cites other and older Epicurean philosophers and seems in no way heretical from Epicurus) was doing. A lot of people who here that everything must be based on current observation, and that there is no reasonable way to reason from current observation to a principle that explains why it is reasonable not to expect to ever find proof of a

god or life after death, are going to find something that is effectively "you can never be certain because new evidence of god or life after death may be uncovered tomorrow" to be insufficient."

For those who are satisfied with a view that observations can never be translated into principles, then that position is good enough. However I don't think that's what Epicurus thought, or what he taught. It seems to me that to simply take the ethics as a starting point would remove much of the force of the philosophy.

So the question I see is more likely something like:

If Epicurus were here today would he update his physics and still incorporate the updated conclusions into a philosophical system?"

Or would he say something like: "I see what you're saying Frances, and I see what you're saying modern physicists. My conclusions about matter and void and infinity and eternity have all been proven wrong. I am through with system-building and use of logic to deduce the unknown from the known is off the table! Let's just point to animals and babies and say "Pleasure is the good" and that's all we need to know."