

"Wise Man" Saying as to Rejoicing At the Misfortune of Another

Post by "Eikadistes" of June 29, 2021 at 12:10 PM

Quote

"...And inspired before the same loud clamor, some will strive with the effort of Apollonphanes [the Stoic] to advance wonderfully to the podium, but others, having landed in [philosophy's] harbor and with hopes offered them that 'not even the venerable flame of Zeus would be able to prevent them taking from the highest point of the citadel' a life that is happy, afterwards, in spite of opposing winds...." (Philodemus, P.Herc 463)

Suppose a small gang of people in poverty are set on committing theft: Let's say **one** member of the group (we'll call them "*Buddy*") has a change of heart and decides to go home at the last minute. *Fast-forward several months* ... the rest of the group has been caught and sentenced.

Prior to the group being sentenced, Buddy felt apprehension, knowing that, *maybe*, he could have *gotten away with it*. If he *had*, the money he acquired could have helped him escape poverty, as it may potentially for the rest of the gang who went through with the theft.

Just before sentencing, Buddy was kicking himself in the pants.

Upon the gang being sentenced, Buddy feels tremendous **relief**, like drinking water when thirsty, or eating when hungry, or making a sound choice when anxious. Their sentencing indicates that Buddy was prudent and made the profitable choice. Prior to the gang being sentenced, Buddy felt anxiety. The moment of the sentencing, Buddy feels vindicated.

It would be a mistake to view Buddy as being a sadist for feeling pleasure at a situation that leads others to pain; it would also be a mistake to judge Buddy for not choosing to perform a sacrificial act of altruism (*such as taking credit for the theft to release his "friends"*).