

Foundations 001 - The First To Stand Up To Religion, Face to Face

Post by "Cassius" of July 28, 2021 at 9:40 AM

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Alas, the ineluctable presence of death, looming always over our lives, drives religion. Against the massive pressure of that great terror, all that mankind can do is occasionally open up little spaces for rational living, as Epicurus did.

Cassius Amicus:

The "all that mankind can do" part may be (hopefully) unduly pessimistic, but as to the "massive pressure" part absolutely yes. I would say today almost as bad as 2300 years ago, and the majority of humanity still "lays prostrate upon the earth, crushed down under the weight of religion." And it's going to remain that way until the views that Epicurus taught (which aren't uniquely his, but which he deserves credit for being among the first to popularize) become more widespread. Interestingly I think we have plenty of proof now too that it's not "science" or "knowledge" that saves the day, because religion is infinitely capable of adjusting to argue that all science comes from god. The key is the confidence - the philosophic view or attitude - that there are indeed natural answers that explain the questions we have. If we simply say "I don't know" to ultimate questions of whether there are gods behind everything then we never dispel the lingering doubt which will always contribute to that "massive pressure" to conform to religion.