

# Anticipations - Justice & Divine Nature

Post by "Don" of August 16, 2021 at 9:43 PM

I have been [chomping at the proverbial bit](#) all day to respond to this thread.

It seems to me some things are getting conflated here, specifically Canonics and Ethics.

The Canon consists of three sources:

"In *The Canon* Epicurus affirms that our **(1) sensations** and **(2) preconceptions** and our **(3) feelings** are the **standards of truth**" (Diogenes Laertius, X.31)

- Sensations αἴσθησις are the sense-perceptions.
- Preconceptions/Anticipations are the infamous προλήψεις
- Feelings πάθη are pleasure and pain. That's it, two. "They affirm that there are two states of feeling, pleasure and pain, which arise in every animate being, and that the one is favourable and the other hostile to that being, and by their means choice and avoidance are determined." (DL, X.33)

The Canon is literally the yardstick, standard, ruler. It is the standard against which things - reality? - are measured. I'm interpreting some things posted here to say that everyone has their own standard. No. I can't see how that can be correct. Everyone has their own **opinions, beliefs, interpretations, etc.**, but the *Canon* provides a standard against which those opinions and beliefs are measured. You can't say a belief or opinion is "empty" κενός if you have nothing against which to measure it. Otherwise, the Canon has no meaning. You can't say the standard is not a standard. That doesn't place a value judgement. If a belief does not START with a canonical sensation, preconception, or feeling, it's not a valid belief. Not all beliefs are equal. How else could you say that a belief that the gods influence my actions is vain/empty/κενός without referring to the yardstick/ruler/Canon?

The Canon provides no ethical or conceptual content. All the canonic faculties (I think that's a good word) function pre-conceptually. "Images" impact the senses. Preconceptions/anticipations are exactly that: they are "before concepts" or "anticipate" concepts. The feelings of pleasure and pain are automatic. We cannot (really) control whether we feel pleasure or pain. We can decide to endure pain as a choice. But we feel pleasure or pain prior to any conceptual understanding of it or "meaning" behind it.

As far as determining whether something is just or not, whether there is justice in a given situation, that is entirely a matter for Ethics and the social contract. The most basic social contract - according to Epicurus - is "to neither harm nor to be harmed." That's not the prolepsis of justice. Granted, I'm still wrestling with what the "Prolepsis of Justice" is, but I'm leaning toward it having to do something with those animal experiments, especially since their working

out something preverbally and maybe preconceptually but rather instinctually. The "prolepsis of justice" will not "tell" us whether something is just or not. That's determined by the social contract of a particular time and place.

I'll stop there for now.