

Science / Physics Update 10/02/16

Post by "Cassius" of October 2, 2016 at 12:07 PM

[Facebook Link](#)

Several recent emails from a reader have reminded me that physics /science is an important part of Epicurean philosophy. Epicurus did not just presume that "living pleasurably" should be the goal of life, he went back to the basics to establish that the universe operates by natural (non-supernatural) means, and that pleasure is therefore the faculty given us by nature to serve as the basis for our choices. He then emphasized, in his letter to Herodotus and to Pythocles, how important it is to understand scientific basics so that we have confidence in these conclusions.

The ending of the letter to Pythocles is a good place to nail this down:

All this, Pythocles, you should keep in mind; for then you will escape a long way from myth, and you will be able to view in their connection the instances which are similar to these. But above all give yourself up to the study of first principles and of infinity and of kindred subjects, and further of the standards and of the feelings and of the end for which we choose between them. For to study these subjects together will easily enable you to understand the causes of the particular phenomena. And those who have not fully accepted this, in proportion as they have not done so, will be ill acquainted with these very subjects, nor have they secured the end for which they ought to be studied.

What brings this to mind are several emails from a reader (A. Singh) who tells me of his interest in astronomy, and forwarded to me several papers that he had produced on areas of interest to him. I have linked those three papers below, and also copied here a number of links to Youtube videos with demonstrations of electrical and magnetic effects which support them:

[Stellar Metamorphosis](#) * [Demystifying Black Holes](#) * [Nuclear Fusion Processes In Stars](#)

Supporting video:

[Can Crushing Via Electricity](#)

[Electrical Pinch Effect](#)

[Induction Heating - A Quick Demonstration](#)

[These Hearts Are On Fire](#)

[Pinch Effect Interaction](#)

Thanks very much to Mr. Singh for these papers and the permission to link to them.

On the same topic, I should remind everyone that Alexander Rios has a separate Facebook page "[Epicurean Touchpoints](#)" where he focuses on links of interest to science topics relevant

to Epicurean philosophy. I encourage everyone to "like" that page to be sure to get Alexander's posts in case they are not cross-posted to the main Epicurean philosophy group.

Thanks again for this important reminder that not only do we wish to live pleasurably, as much as anything else we need to have confidence that living pleasurably is our appropriate goal in life, and the key to that investigation is the study of Nature.

Let's close with this reminder from Lucretius Book 1 (Munro translation):

Wherefore we must well grasp the principle of things above, the principle by which the courses of the sun and moon go on, the force by which every thing on earth proceeds, but above all we must find out by keen reason what the soul and the nature of the mind consist of, and what thing it is-which meets us when awake and frightens our minds, if we are under the influence of disease; meets and frightens us too when we are buried in sleep; so that we seem to 'see and hear speaking to us face to face them who are dead, whose bones earth holds in its embrace. ... This terror then and darkness of mind must be dispelled not by the rays of the sun and glittering shafts of day, but by the aspect and the law of nature; the warp of whose design we shall begin with this first principle, nothing is ever gotten out of nothing by divine power.