

Why was Epicurus condemned to the sixth circle of hell in Dante's Divine Comedy?

Post by “Matt” of January 7, 2019 at 11:22 AM

It is clear, in my opinion, that Epicurus was condemned entirely due to his position on a non-providential deity.

I don't even think his hedonism was enough to cause such a condemnation, since even the Biblical narrative (especially the Hebrew Bible) endorsed material pleasure (within the scope of the Law). After all, the Israelites sought the land of Milk and Honey to increase and multiply in.

That does sound pretty pleasant.

It was the fact that his position on the gods flew in the face of a providential and active God. The one thing that is required in being a Jew or Christian, is to believe in that specific deity. This position could never be accepted by any theist that believed in a deity that had a purpose for life. Thus, he was condemned by Jewish and Christian commentators as one who has committed an unpardonable sin with his doctrine.

However....

Epicurus did not live in the time of Jesus. No Christian should condemn or judge him as though he is damned....they can judge his philosophy, but the man himself (and the state of his soul) accordingly would be off limits. As ALL people should be. Dante was without compassion and well out of his lane to prejudge.