

Atlantic article about enjoyment vs. pleasure

Post by "Cassius" of May 3, 2022 at 8:58 PM

The only thing I would tweak on Don's response is this:

Quote from Don

not every pleasurable feeling should be chosen because some pleasurable feelings will lead to pain.

Since you're early in the reading of Epicurus, Renelliza, I would stress that this probably needs to be stated as:

"...not every pleasurable feeling should be chosen because some pleasurable feelings will lead to MORE PAIN THAN THAT PLEASURE IS WORTH TO YOU".

I think Don and i are together on that point and he probably will agree with me - I am sure he will say so if he does not.

The same people who will argue that "absence of pain" is the heart of Epicurean philosophy rather than "Pleasure" will argue to you that it is necessary according to Epicurus to banish every pain at every moment, and to never take any course of action that will lead to any pain whatsoever.

That's clearly NOT what Epicurus says in the letter to Menoeceus or other places -- Epicurus is realistic and knows that life requires exertion, and much exertion is painful, and yet we sometimes choose a painful action anyway not only to avoid worse pain, but to achieve pleasures that greatly outweigh the cost in pain.

If Don or anyone thinks I am misstating that please correct me.

Quote

Letter to Menoeceus:

For we recognize pleasure as the first good innate in us, and from pleasure we begin every act of choice and avoidance, and to pleasure we return again, using the feeling as the standard by which we judge every good.

And since pleasure is the first good and natural to us, for this very reason we do not choose every pleasure, but sometimes we pass over many pleasures, when greater

discomfort accrues to us as the result of them: and similarly we think many pains better than pleasures, since a greater pleasure comes to us when we have endured pains for a long time.

Every pleasure then because of its natural kinship to us is good, yet not every pleasure is to be chosen: even as every pain also is an evil, yet not all are always of a nature to be avoided.