

# Natural Goods in Epicureanism

Post by "Cassius" of June 12, 2022 at 5:11 PM

We talked about some of this in the podcast recording today and it is truly a rabbit chase.

I am not sure the chase can even get off the ground until we decide what we mean by "good", which is well before we put any modifiers on the term like natural or necessary or intrinsic or instrumental or anything else.

And part of answering that question probably means coming to terms with what Epicurus really meant in his warning about walking around uselessly harping on the meaning of good.

Do we end up, as Francis Wright apparently did (need to check the text) concluding that there is nothing good but pleasure, and nothing bad/evil but pain?

I am tempted to say the answer is "yes" but so much depends on the subtle meanings assigned to the words in even that formulation.

I tend to think that whenever someone wants to discuss this, they are suggesting that inseparable from the word "good" is an implicit "always." And if that is the case, I find it very difficult to designate anything as "always good" other than pleasure.

Or do we define the good as Torquatus suggested in On Ends that "everyone agrees...." That as to the "supreme good" ---

"The problem before us then is, what is the climax and standard of things good, and this in the opinion of all philosophers must needs be such that we are bound to test all things by it, but the standard itself by nothing. Epicurus places this standard in pleasure, which he lays down to be the supreme good, while pain is the supreme evil; and he founds his proof of this on the following considerations."