

Comparing Translations of the Tetrpharmakon

Post by "Cassius" of March 11, 2017 at 3:36 PM

[Jason Baker](#)

[15 hrs](#)

The Hutchinson translation* of the Tetrpharmakos annoys me. Here are a handful of other English translations of Philodemus' version for contemplation:

God should not concern us.

Death is not to be feared.

What is good is easy to obtain.

What is bad is easily avoided. -Bob Lane

Not to be feared is god

Not to be felt is death

What is good is easily done

What is dire is easily borne. -Anon

God is not fearsome,

Death not frightening,

The good easily got,

The bad easily endured. -Tsouna

Not to be feared - god,

not to be viewed with apprehension - death,

the good - easily acquired,

the terrible - easily endured. -Gilleland (paraphrased)

God presents no fears,

death no worries,

while good is readily attainable,

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evil is readily endurable. -Long and Sedley

*Don't fear god,

Don't worry about death;

What is good is easy to get,

What is terrible is easy to endure

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5 You, Matt Jackson, Mish Taylor and 2 others

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Hiram Crespo **the fourth one sounds like Yoda** Image may contain: text

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Jason Baker Image not found or type unknown

Jason Baker **The full translation he provided was**

Not to be feared - God,

not to be viewed with apprehension - death,

on one hand, the good - easily acquired,

on the other hand, the terrible - easily endured.

I felt that was very unwieldy and novel, since <handedness> was not found in the original. I omitted it as unnecessary, and the Yoda-ness appealed. Image not found or type unknown 😊 Image not found or type unknown

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[Cassius Amicus](#) type unknown

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[Mish Taylor](#) type unknown

[Mish Taylor](#) I re read the 4th one in 'yoda voice' ! 1f642.png 

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[Matt Jackson](#) type unknown

[Matt Jackson](#) God no.

Death no.

Good easy.

Bad easy.

The quick and terrible Jackson Translation.

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[Panos Alexiou](#) I'm also not convinced about the general translation of 'ανύποπτον' as not frightening. It means more 'not perceivable' which also makes more sense.

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[Cassius Amicus](#) type unknown

[Cassius Amicus](#) Jason could you add the Hutchinson translation to the original post for comparison?

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[Cassius Amicus](#)


[Cassius Amicus](#) While I use the Tetrpharmakon often and I don't want to dwell on my reservations about it, I personally still find myself choking over the word "easy" or even "readily" in parts 3 and 4. So I like to remember that those words (easily / readily) are nowhere contained in the full length of PD3 and PD4 as attributed to Epicurus himself (and I don't think that Epicurus himself would have used the tone which comes across in English to summarize his meaning, which was probably

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already as terse as he could make it). But I also don't condemn the writer of the Tetrapharmakon for the seemingly harsh / cavalier result, as we have so little of the context in which the writer would have no doubt have explained fully what he meant.

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[Ilkka Vuoristo](#) "You can only understand the four-fold cure if you understand the whole of the philosophy." [1f603.png](#)  Image placeholder or type unknown

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