

# PD19 And The Meaning Of No "Greater" Pleasure

Post by "Cassius" of August 13, 2022 at 7:25 AM

Yes I do think you and Godfrey both are largely in agreement with DeWitt here.

In this case I think his Christian allusions are maybe better placed than in some other areas.

For example he seems almost theological with

Quote

Only the possibility of having enjoyed all pleasures to the full in this life can counterbalance the relinquishment of the hope of enjoying eternal pleasures in the afterlife

I do think that Epicurus was aiming for something like that - an explanation that is not only logical but rises to an emotional level of satisfaction necessary to combat the emotional lure of false religion.

Even Dewitts cite of

Quote

He liveth long who liveth well

And

Quote

It is not growing like a tree, in bulk,

Doth make man better be

Seem pretty good to me.

In virtually all of what we are doing we are looking to lock in confidence in the conclusion, and if we don't phrase the argument in an understandable and even gripping way it's hard to accomplish that goal.

Epicurus' example of picking not just the bulkiest but the most tasteful food at a banquet is really good for that, I think. It's real world and we can immediately grasp its attractiveness in combatting the maybe more immediate thought of looking for the "longest" rather than the "most pleasant.". There may not be a universal ranking of pleasures in terms of desirability, but

I think we have to clearly identify in our minds that duration or time is only one aspect of our perception of pleasures, and not the most important aspect of our ranking. If we internalize even that simple observation I think that carries us a long way to the understanding we need.

Even - especially - the analogy of the Alpine climber working to gain the summit is a good analogy. We want very badly to get there and the achievement is tremendously emotional and satisfying, but we don't have to - or want to - stay there very long.