

Papyrus Oxyrhynchus 215

Post by "Kalosyni" of August 17, 2022 at 4:50 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

We can at one and the same time understand that (1) living in a cave on bread and water may in fact be appropriate under certain circumstances but also (2) that such circumstances and manner of living is not the norm nor should it be accepted as a norm.

This may be outside the original subject matter of this thread, however I feel the need to examine more closely this phrase: "living in a cave on bread and water". I know it represents "asceticism", and that an Epicurean would not choose to live an ascetic lifestyle. Yet what about others who are not yet Epicurean or who are new to Epicureanism -- what would this actually look like? What are the ways in which people try to retreat from civilization?

- 1) Moving to a remote mountain cabin (or to the desert).
- 2) Someone who is retired and lives alone choosing to live so frugally that they only leave the house for occasional grocery shopping.
- 3) Seeking an ascetic spiritual life - moving into a Catholic or Buddhist monastery.

Why would someone choose this for themselves? (I doubt anyone would choose an ascetic lifestyle if they could easily live normally).

- 1) Lack of finances
- 2) Social anxiety disorder
- 3) Spiritual retreat for religious reasons or self-reflection (probably caused by an "existential crisis")

Could there be aspects of Epicureanism which could help people who are considering living as an "ascetic", due to feelings of anxiety, etc? Is it possible that Epicurus had teachings on psychological remedies, and those writings were lost? From Book 10 of Diogenes Laertius we know that he wrote an entire book "Of Choice and Avoidance" (and also other books).