

PD19 And The Meaning Of No "Greater" Pleasure

Post by “reneliza” of August 20, 2022 at 3:47 PM

During our 20th meetup, I loved Martin’s temperature analogy, and thinking of pleasure as an intensive property so much! Temperature is such a familiar concept that I think it should work well for explaining some of these concepts generally

"Infinite time contains an equal amount of temperature as limited time."

I’m still curious about the second part though: “if one measures, by reason, the limits of pleasure.”

What does it mean to use reason to measure the limits of pleasure? (Or is that wording not representative of what Epicurus meant)

If we can have the same amount of pleasure in our short lives as we could over infinite time, but only if we use reason to measure the limits of pleasure, it seems pretty crucial to be able to do that!

Does it mean that we’re using reason to generally determine what the limits of pleasure are (ie his response to the Platonic claim that there is no limit to pleasure) as a general principle? Or does it mean to measure the limits of pleasure in a more day-to-day or moment-by-moment sense, using our reason at the time? Or something entirely different??

I will say, I think the whole thing makes sense together to say:

Once you realize that pleasure doesn’t increase beyond removal of all pain, you can see that as much pleasure can exist in a limited life as an unlimited one.

But I’m not certain if that’s how it was intended.