

# Episode One Hundred Thirty-Seven - The Letter to Menoeceus 04 - On Death (Part Two)

Post by "Don" of September 2, 2022 at 9:11 PM

Looks like there's also Usener Fragment 228

[ U228 ]

Plutarch, *That Epicurus actually makes a pleasant life impossible*, 2, p. 1086F-: Heraclides then, a student of literature, is repaying his debt to Epicurus for such favors of theirs "as rabble of poets" and "Homer's idiocies" and the verity of abuse that Metrodorus has in so many writings heaped upon the poet.

Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies*, V.14, p. 257.52: Homer, while representing the gods as subject to human passions, appears to know the Divine Being, whom Epicurus does not so revere.

[Epicurus: Fragments - translation \(2\)](#)

So, from that it does appear - to me - that Epicurus (and Metrodorus) were most concerned with Homer and the depiction of the gods in poetry.

There's also U227:

Cicero, *On End-Goals, Good and Bad*, II.4.12: Your school {Epicureanism} argues decisively that there is no need for the aspirant to philosophy to study literature at all.

Cf., *Ibid.*, I.21, 71-72 (Torquatus to Cicero): You are disposed to think him uneducated. The reason is that he refused to consider any education worth the name that did not help to school us in happiness. Was he to spend his time, as you encourage Triarius and me to do, in perusing poets, who give us nothing solid and useful, but merely childish amusement?

And U341:

Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, VII.7.13: Zeno, the Stoic, taught that there was a hell, and that the abodes of the virtuous were separated from the wicked, and that the former inhabited quiet and delightful regions, while the latter paid their penalty in dark places and horrible caverns of mud. The prophets made the same thing clear to us. Therefore, Epicurus was in error who thought that this was a figment of the poet's imagination, and took those punishments of hell to be those which are borne in this life.

And U364:

Dionysius the Episcopalian, *On Nature*, by way of Eusebius of Caesarea, *Preparation for the Gospel*, XIV 27, 8 p. 782C: As for the gods of whom their poets sing as "Givers of good things," {Homer, Od. viii. 325} these philosophers with mocking reverence say, The gods are neither givers nor partakers of any good things. In what way then do they show evidence of the existence of gods, if they neither see them present and doing something, as those who in admiration of the sun and moon and stars said that they were called gods (θεοός) because of their running (θεειν), nor assign to them any work of creation or arrangement, that they might call them gods from setting (θεϊναι), that is making (for in this respect in truth the Creator and Artificer of the universe alone is God), nor exhibit any administration, or judgment, or favor of theirs towards mankind, that we should owe them fear or honor, and therefore worship them? Or did Epicurus peep out from the world, and pass beyond the compass of the heavens, or go out through some secret gates known only to himself, and behold the gods dwelling in the void, and deem them and their abundant luxury blessed? And did he thence become a devotee of pleasure, and an admirer of their life in the void, and so exhort all who are to be made like unto those gods to participate in this blessing, [etc.]