

Episode One Hundred Thirty Eight - Letter to Menoecus 5 - Pleasure Part One

Post by "Cassius" of September 6, 2022 at 3:53 PM

[Quote from Godfrey](#)

point to clarify, at least in my mind, is that rather than being bad or evil, pain is a guide pointing away from health.

If indeed desire is a guide, and it is part of the healthy functioning of the organism to experience it, would it not be equally or more proper to call it a pleasure?

I think an argument can readily be made that these feelings of desire are not problems, but the healthy functioning we should wish to occur, and that we find these spurs to action pleasurable rather than painful.

Wasting away from lack of food is certainly painful, but having an appetite for a good meal strikes me as readily something that can be considered pleasurable.

If ALL feeling must be categorized as pleasure or pain, then I could see desire being listed among the pleasures at least as readily as a month the pains.

When we lose all desire, we die. In a very real sense life IS at root the desire for pleasure. Robots and the dead cannot feel or desire. Is not in a very real sense life the ability to desire?

Would the [Epicurean gods](#) feel pleasure in their blessedness if they did not desire that pleasure?

Maybe the ultimate point is that the ability to feel, the ability to experience pain, is "good" in the sense that it is life, and "desire" is just a subset of pain as the motivation to continue to life on. We never "desire" pain but we use the faculty of feeling as the guide to maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain.

I think I can work up a good head of steam to argue that desire is at the root of what it means to be alive, which is why advocacy of suppression of all desire strikes me as so "evil."