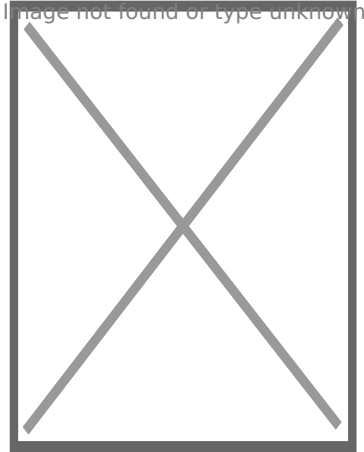


Episode One Hundred Thirty-Nine - The Letter to Menoecus 06 - Pleasure Part Two

Post by "Don" of September 7, 2022 at 11:56 AM

For those interested:



[Letter To Menoikeus: A New Translation With Commentary : Don Boozar : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive](#)

A new translation of the Letter to Menoikeus (Menoecus) by Epicurus with commentary.
archive.org

Additionally, we believe αὐτάρκεια is a great good. Not so that we are furnished with the use of a few things; but, if we were to have many things, we would be content with few things. Those in need who are genuinely convinced of this find extravagance more pleasant, and that every natural desire is easily procured, and an empty desire difficult to get. For simple flavors bring equal pleasure to extravagant ways of life when once the pain of body and mind experienced through lack or deficiency is removed. [131] A simple meal of hearty, wholesome bread and spring water delivers the most extreme pleasure whenever food and drink have been brought to bear against hunger and thirst; and, when extravagant experiences do come up every once in a while, they are experienced more intensely by us, and we are better able to fearlessly face the vicissitudes of fortune.

Therefore, whenever we say repeatedly that "pleasure is the τέλος," we do not say the pleasure of those who are prodigal like those who are ignorant, those who don't agree with us, or those who believe wrongly; but we mean that which neither pains the body nor troubles the mind. [132] For it is not an endless string of drinking parties and festivals, and not taking advantage of slaves and women, nor does an extravagant table of fish and other things bring forth a sweet life but self-controlled reasoning and examining the cause of every choice and rejection and driving out the greatest number of opinions that take hold of the mind and bring

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2655-episode-one-hundred-thirty-nine-the-letter-to-menoecus-06-pleasure-part-two/?postID=19677#post19677>

confusion and trouble.

And so the foundation of all these and the greatest good is φρόνησις, practical wisdom. On this account, practical wisdom is prized more dearly than philosophy itself, and from practical wisdom springs forth all the remaining virtues, teaching us that a pleasurable life does not exist without the traits of wisdom, morality, and justice; nor do the traits of wisdom, morality, and justice without pleasure: because the virtues grow together with a pleasurable life and the pleasurable life is inseparable from these.

Personally, one of the biggest epiphanies for me while doing my translation and commentary on the letter was the "bread and water" section in 131. Realizing that that was NOT an ascetic instruction but rather the basic meal of regular ancient Greeks was eye-opening.

Another eye-opener for me was the vocabulary used in the "not taking advantage of slaves (or boys) and women" section.

Feel free to read my commentary at Internet Archive and let me know if you agree with my conclusions. We're all here to grow.