

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

Post by "Cassius" of September 8, 2022 at 6:34 PM

[Quote from reneliza](#)

Does he ever say anything about thinking ahead to future pleasure as a form of pleasure? (Or anything remotely related)

I am thinking that the passages about "confident expectation of continuance" might be applicable, and there is also the passage in Diogenes of Oinoanda about the sequence in which pleasure comes. I started to quote that earlier but will add that here in a moment:

Not really sure this applies directly, because he is talking about cause and effect, but it MIGHT be stretchable to cover the point. Probably better to go to the "Confident expectation" passages.....

[Fr.33](#)

... such virtues ... pleasure ... and [of virtues] ... feels [much] pain ... the evil [is] ... [from] all virtues ... apart from tension ... pleasure, but these quibblers admit ... often found not ..., [and Zeno] himself [proposes] the opinion, just as if he means virtue when he has said «pleasure,» and that men run to them. And again elsewhere having forgotten this hunger ([for they did] not [say that]) ... of this ... so that ... it ... in no way is able, as these people lay it down, like a bait, for all human beings, to draw them, like birds or fish, open-mouthed to the names of the virtues, and sometimes itself ... [illusions (?). And you are] not ashamed, [you] wretched people, [of contradicting both yourselves and] one another: [for indeed, employing puerile] wit, [you reject] pleasure, while cleverly agreeing [with us about sensation], so that you not [prevented from] passing through [an area in safety], when you venture to climb crags.

Well now, I want to deflect also the error that, along with the feeling of self-love, has you in its grip —an error that, more than any other, further inflates your doctrine as ignorant. The error is this: [not] all causes in things precede their effects, even if the majority do, but some of them precede their effects, others [coincide with] them, and others follow them.

Examples of causes that precede are cautery and surgery saving life: in these cases extreme pain must be borne, and it is after this that pleasure quickly follows.

Examples of coincident causes are [solid] and liquid nourishment and, in addition to these, [sexual acts:] we do not eat [food] and experience pleasure afterwards, nor do we drink wine

and experience pleasure afterwards, nor do we emit semen and experience pleasure afterwards; rather the action brings about these pleasures for us immediately, without awaiting the future.

[As for causes that follow, an example is expecting] to win praise after death: although men experience pleasure now because there will be a favourable memory of them after they have gone, nevertheless the cause of the pleasure occurs later.

Now you, being unable to mark off these distinctions, and being unaware that the virtues have a place among the causes that coincide with their effects (for they are borne along with [pleasure]), go completely astray.]