

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

Post by "Don" of September 9, 2022 at 4:35 PM

By Zeus! I knew that "bread and water" had done damage but I had no idea how much damage!!

[Quote from Cassius](#)

whether Epicurus himself was restricting himself to "ordinary food" on all occasions, much less "bread and water.

Even that phrasing - "restricting himself" - strikes me as a slippery slope. If maza and wine (or watered wine as was customary) were just what you ate at a midday meal, you're not "restricting" yourself. That's just your expectation. I see Epicurus as being frugal but not ascetic. And frugal in the sense of the old *Frugal Gourmet*, "Frugal doesn't mean cheap. It means you don't waste your money." I could see Epicurus making sure the maza was well prepared: fresh, warm, maybe with some honey in the dough. Good fresh spring water for drinking maybe kept in the shade in pottery to keep it slightly cool.

We're told that in the diatribe against Epicurus that "he spent a whole mina daily on his table, as he himself says in his letter to Leontion and in that to the philosophers at Mitylene."

"Is this the Doctors vertuous Epicurus, who spent every day a Mina, which was an hundred Drachma's, that is 3.l.2.s.6.d. every Drachma being 7.d.ob." (Note: That's £3 2 shillings 6 pence in 1652. That's over \$700 a day in 2022 \$s [according to this website](#))

[Arcana Microcosmi, II:16](#)

PS. I wonder if there's a nugget of truth and that's \$700 for the household or something like that.