

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

Post by “Cassius” of September 12, 2022 at 1:47 PM

[Quote from Kalosyni](#)

In other words the highest form of sensual pleasure (at it's height) will also be free from mental pain (we will be free from worry and fear).

Let me ask a question about this for Kalosyni or anyone:

We have from three separate sources this well-attested statement of Epicurus about knowing "the good":

Quote

Athenaeus, *Deipnosophists*, XII p. 546E: Not only Aristippus and his followers, but also Epicurus and his welcomed kinetic pleasure; I will mention what follows, to avoid speaking of the “storms” {of passion} and the “delicacies” which Epicurus often cites, and the “stimuli” which he mentions in his *On the End-Goal*. For he says “For I at least do not even know what I should conceive the good to be, if I eliminate the pleasures of taste, and eliminate the pleasures of sex, and eliminate the pleasures of listening, and eliminate the pleasant motions caused in our vision by a visible form.”

Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Philosophers*, X.6: It is observed too that in his treatise *On the End-Goal*, he writes in these terms: “I know not how to conceive the good, apart from the pleasures of taste, sexual pleasures, the pleasures of sound, and the pleasures of beautiful form.”

Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations*, III.18.41: Why do we shirk the question, Epicurus, and why do we not confess that we mean by pleasure what you habitually say it is, when you have thrown off all sense of shame? Are these your words or not? For instance, in that book which embraces all your teaching (for I shall now play the part of translator, so no one may think I am inventing) you say this: “For my part I find no meaning which I can attach to what is termed good, if I take away from it the pleasures obtained by taste, if I take away the pleasures which come from listening to music, if I take away too the charm derived by the eyes from the sight of figures in movement, or other pleasures by any of the senses in the whole man. Nor indeed is it possible to make such a statement as this – that it is joy of the mind which is alone to be reckoned as a good; for I understand by a mind in a state of joy, that it is so, when it has the hope of all the

pleasures I have named – that is to say the hope that nature will be free to enjoy them without any blending of pain.” And this much he says in the words I have quoted, so that anyone you please may realize what Epicurus understands by pleasure.

If "freedom from pain" amounts to the highest sensual pleasure, would you expect that "freedom from pain" or "freedom from disturbance" could just as easily have been listed among these (taste / sex / sound / dance) that Epicurus chose to list? If so, why? If not, why not?