

Questions Re PD 26 - PD30 From the 10/5/22 Zoom

Post by "Don" of October 6, 2022 at 11:53 PM

Okay, my mind is rambling, I'm tired, it's late, and still getting over some illness, but I made the decision to start playing with the Greek. Here's my work in progress... But then I'm really hanging up the phone and going to sleep. Really... Really! 😊

PD30

ἐν αἷς τῶν φυσικῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν μὴ ἐπ' ἀλγοῦν δὲ ἐπαναγουσῶν ἐὰν μὴ συντελεσθῶσιν, ὑπάρχει ἡ σπουδὴ σύντονος, παρὰ κενὴν δόξαν αὐταὶ γίνονται, καὶ οὐ παρὰ τὴν ἑαυτῶν φύσιν οὐ διαχέονται ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὴν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου κενοδοξίαν.

τῶν φυσικῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν the "physikon" desires

φυσικός < φύσις

I. natural, native, opp. to διδασκτός ("things taught, learned"), Xen., Arist.

II. of or in the order of nature, natural, physical, opp. to ἠθικός ("morals, ethics"), Arist.

So, the φυσικῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν seem to be, while usually translated just "natural desires", are those desires that arise naturally from within the needs of our bodies and from the needs within our minds, too, maybe, since Epicurus teaches that our minds are physical; from our physical nature, not those desires that we learn or are taught we *should* have. These desires arising within our minds can also come from the need for well-being and not just shelter, food, and other physical needs.

Then when saying that καὶ οὐ παρὰ τὴν ἑαυτῶν φύσιν οὐ διαχέονται "and not through their own 'nature' (φύσις) are they not dispelled themselves." (Double negatives were common ways of emphasizing a point not the way we think of them)

Compare the last phrases:

καὶ οὐ παρὰ τὴν ἑαυτῶν φύσιν οὐ διαχέονται ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὴν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου κενοδοξίαν (διαχέονται).

-- οὐ παρὰ τὴν ἑαυτῶν φύσιν "*not*" by its own nature dispelled

-- παρὰ τὴν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου κενοδοξίαν "by the empty beliefs of humans dispelled

παρὰ with the accusative case can mean "*by*" which anything increases or decreases, and so of the cause according to which anything comes into existence or varies" which seems to be the intent here in this phrase.