

"Epicurus, Father of the Enlightenment" Article Review

Post by "Cassius" of December 19, 2022 at 1:40 PM

I don't have time right now to read the whole article but I do want to comment on the opening paragraph:

Quote

Abstract

Epicurus (341-270 BC) was, with Plato and Aristotle, one of the three great philosophers of the ancient world. He developed an integrated system of ethics and natural philosophy that, he claimed and many accepted, showed everyone the way to a life of the greatest happiness.

Yes I agree, and I understand that when someone writes an article or gives a speech, you want a hook to get peoples' interest, and telling them that what they are about to hear can make them happier is a great way to gain their attention.

But I personally tend to identify with the Lucretian approach, which I see, from the way Lucretius chose to open his poem, as being much better stated as something like:

"What I am about to tell you is - whether you like it or not - "the way things are." You will find some of it to be bitter, but if you want true health, and if you want to be a man and deal with reality, then I will tell you about the leader who broke the chains of supernatural religion, exposed the fraud of priests and false philosophers, and shows you that you only have one life to live -- so you better make hay while the sun shines.

And by the way, you'll also have more pleasure and less pain living this way too."

If I could put myself in Epicurus' shoes at the end of his life, by far that is the way I would have wanted to be remembered.