

Perspectives On "Proving" That Pleasure is "The Good"

Post by "Don" of December 22, 2022 at 8:50 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

the Plutarch fragment:

"That which produces a jubilation unsurpassed is the nature of good, if you apply your mind rightly and then stand firm and do not stroll about, prating meaninglessly about the good." Epicurus, as cited in Usener Fragment U423

Does that fragment mean "anything that produces pleasure should be considered good" and you should not obsess over other implications of the word 'good'?"

Come with me, this way, down another tunnel in the rabbit warren: 😊

That Plutarch fragment is a little more complex than I first realized. That specific excerpt is a little misleading. Here's the link to Perseus:

[Plutarch, Non posse suaviter vivi secundum Epicurum, section 7](#)

(Emphasis and notations added)

Quote from Epicurus as reported by Plutarch

Like unto this is that of Epicurus, where he saith: The very essence of good arises from the escaping of bad, *and* a man's recollecting, considering, and rejoicing within himself that this hath befallen him. For what occasions transcending joy (he saith) is some great impending evil escaped; and in this lies the very nature and essence of good, if a man attain unto it aright, and contain himself when he hath done, and not ramble and prate idly about it.

The archaic language is hard to parse. Bailey provides more context:

Quote

That which creates Joy insuperable is the complete

removal of a great evil. And this is the nature of good, one can once grasp it rightly, and then hold by it, and not walk about babbling idly about the good.

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2795-perspectives-on-proving-that-pleasure-is-the-good/?postID=21486#post21486>

Is Plutarch saying that Epicurus said don't talk about "the good" or don't talk about escaping the evil that brought you pleasure? Just experience the pleasure of escaping the evil and move on with your life? That's going to take some parsing in Plutarch's Greek.