

As To The Three Legs Of The Canon (Sensations, Feelings, Anticipations) Is it Possible to Experience (Receive Data?) From One Without The Others?

Post by "Cassius" of February 5, 2023 at 4:23 PM

This morning we recorded the first episode for Chapter 8 and one thing that we came across, but did not deal with yet, led us to consider whether it is possible to experience "feeling" (pleasure or pain) separate and apart and independently of anticipations and feelings. This question arises in discussing the connection and relationship between the three faculties.

This question implicates PD2 (without sensation we are dead) and it is something discussed in the [Wenham article](#) which I regularly cite on the kinetic/katastematic issue.

Before we address it (probably episode 161) it would be good to discuss it in a thread. I am initially posting this in 160s notes but will probably move the topic to a separate thread of its own.

Perhaps a better way of asking the question would involve formulations like:

1. Can you experience pleasure without a sensation being involved / give rise to it?
2. Does every sensation evoke a feeling of pleasure or pain?

Given the big issues involving what anticipations really are, adding it into the mix may be more trouble than it is worth, but probably the same questions apply:

1. Can you experience pleasure without an anticipation being involved / give rise to it?
2. Does every anticipation evoke a feeling of pleasure or pain?

What of the workings of the mind in all this? Do those workings of the mind constitute or generate sensations?

How do the three work together? DeWitt's formulation starts out with:

Quote

The three criteria are neither three aspects of a single capacity nor yet three discrete capacities which function separately from one another. To Epicurus body and soul are alike corporeal; they are also coterminous. Consequently all reactions of the individual to his environment are total or psychosomatic. Thus in the case of every reaction Nature is on the alert to register approval or disapproval by the signals of pleasure and pain. This is the function of the Feelings in the meaning of the Canon.

It is true that in the Greek language all three criteria may be called *pathe*, in modern parlance "reactions," but they are not identical. It is true also that all three may be components of a given reaction but still they occur in sequence. Sensation is irrational and merely registers a quality, for example, sweetness. It is the intelligence that says, "This is honey," and it is the Feelings that report, "I like it" or "I don't like it." Again, it is positively known that Epicurus postulated the existence of an innate sense of justice and called this an Anticipation. Now injustice hurts and it is the Feelings that register this fact. If a man is condemned to pay an unjust penalty, the pain is a reaction distinct from the aural sensation of hearing the verdict.

Agree? Disagree? Your comments are welcome!