

PD01 - Gratitude and Weakness (Especially In Relation to the Gods)

Post by "Don" of May 9, 2023 at 10:36 PM

[TauPhi](#) : You bring up some interesting points. I had a few thoughts as I was reading your post.

[Quote from TauPhi](#)

[Epicurean gods](#) can be viewed as immortal only when seen as collective of infinite number of blessed beings. On individual level they must be creatures that reached the state of blessedness but they are alive, created from compounds of atoms and therefore mortal and destructible.

This section I found intriguing. The idea of an individual god vs the gods as a collective made me think of the scholia attached to [PD01](#).

[Quote from Hicks translation at Perseus Project](#)

[PD01](#). A blessed and eternal being has no trouble himself and brings no trouble upon any other being ; hence he is exempt from movements of anger and partiality, for every such movement implies weakness [Elsewhere he says that the gods are discernible by reason alone, some being numerically distinct, while others result uniformly from the continuous influx of similar images directed to the same spot and in human form.]

Scholia ("ancient commentary") section: [ἐν ἄλλοις δέ φησι τοὺς θεοὺς λόγῳ θεωρητοὺς, οὓς μὲν κατ' ἀριθμὸν ὑφ' ἑστώτας, οὓς δὲ καθ' ὁμοειδέϊαν ἐκ τῆς συνεχοῦς ἐπιρρύσεως τῶν ὁμοίων εἰδώλων ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἀποτετελεσμένῳ ἀνθρωποειδῶς.]

Honestly, the "numerically distinct" and images and the rest have always befuddled me. Breaking it down, the "discernable through reason alone" here is a translation of simply λόγῳ θεωρητοὺς "'discernable' by/through reason, thinking, " (dative of [λόγος](#)). I don't see evidence of the word alone, but I suppose it's implied. LSJ includes the following in their definition: λόγῳ θεωρητά mentally conceived, opp. sensibly perceived. So, per that definition of that phrase, we can say that *The gods are (only) mentally conceived, not sensibly perceived*. Does that mean they can *never* be sensibly perceived, i.e., perceived by the physical senses and so not actually corporeal? Then the scholia talks about "others" as in "other gods"? Are there several different kinds of gods? Some can only be mentally conceived, and others are produced by continuous "similar images" *directed to* the same spot? Those images are the familiar εἰδώλων (eidolon), the films/simulacra/images being shed by bodies. The gods are an odd lot!

Oh, I didn't set out to resolve anything... just throwing more grist in the mill 😊