

Episode 180 - "Epicurus And His Philosophy" Part 32

- Chapter 13 - The True Piety 03

Post by "Joshua" of June 27, 2023 at 12:34 AM

We finished this chapter on Sunday and it's only occurring to me now that we never addressed the alleged Paradox of Epicurus. David Hume summarizes the passage from Lactantius:

Quote

Epicurus's old questions are yet unanswered. Is he willing to prevent evil, but not able? then is he impotent. Is he able, but not willing? then is he malevolent. Is he both able and willing? whence then is evil?

It's probably worth mentioning that the reason we never talk about this trilemma is that nothing similar to it survives in any ancient text prior to Lactantius in Late Antiquity. Scholars have also debated whether the paradox as expressed is even consistent with the texts that do survive.