

Happy Belated 20th - And Thoughts On Suicide from An Epicurean Perspective

Post by "Elli" of March 21, 2019 at 4:38 PM

Speaking with you for students in Universities, I would like to share with you an experience. The daughter of my companion lives in USA as she is getting a Phd in the University of Carnegie Mellon in Pittsburgh. Last year she send an email to her father when with surprise she saw an epigram that it was hanging inside her University. The epigram was the following Epicurean saying :

"We do not so much need the assistance of our friends as we do the confidence of their assistance in need". - Epicurus

Thus, her father send me her email and I answered to both of them with the following :

The epicurean saying that is hanging inside the University is the No. 34. Nevertheless, in the "friendship" and before we refer to this saying 34, in the order of epicurean sayings precede two others, which are very important. That is, we first understand the sayings 23 and 28 and then we end up with 34. Thus, we clearly see that friendship, like any relationship, is not something abstract, elusive and idealistic, but is based on mutual benefit as being applied, in a course of life, according to experience (i.e. with frankness of speech that is accompanied with actions of care). That is, to end up in 34 and to have confidence of our friends' assistance in need, we have checked them as they have checked us too. In the saying 28 the word "δοκιμαστέον" as used by Epicurus, it is at the beginning of each friendship-relationship. Because, for the approval of someone in our life and to move on, we have to run some risks too. Otherwise, if someone does not like to run some risks he would sit on his sofa staring the ceiling of his home. And whenever he would have a need to talk to someone or to be helped by someone, so then he'll talk to his ceiling.

The epicurean sayings 23 and 28 are the following :

XXIII.(23) Every friendship in itself is to be desired; but the initial cause of friendship is based on the [mutual] benefit.

XXVIII.(28). We must not approve either those who are always ready for friendship, or those who hang back, but for friendship's sake we must run risks.