

# Episode 203 - Cicero's On Ends - Book Two - Part 11 - Do The Senses Have Jurisdiction To Pronounce On The Supreme Good?

Post by "Cassius" of November 26, 2023 at 6:58 AM

Welcome to Episode 203 of Lucretius Today. This is a podcast dedicated to the poet Lucretius, who wrote "On The Nature of Things," the only complete presentation of Epicurean philosophy left to us from the ancient world. Each week we walk you through the Epicurean texts, and we discuss how Epicurean philosophy can apply to you today. If you find the Epicurean worldview attractive, we invite you to join us in the study of Epicurus at [EpicureanFriends.com](http://EpicureanFriends.com), where you will find a discussion thread for each of our podcast episodes and many other topics.

This week we continue our discussion of Book Two of Cicero's On Ends, which are largely devoted Cicero's attack on Epicurean Philosophy. "On Ends" contains important criticisms of Epicurus that have set the tone for standard analysis of his philosophy for the last 2000 years. Going through this book gives us the opportunity to review those attacks, take them apart, and respond to them as an ancient Epicurean might have done, and much more fully than Cicero allowed Torquatus, his Epicurean spokesman, to do.

Follow along with us here: [Cicero's On Ends - Complete Reid Edition](#). Check any typos or other questions against the original PDF which can be found [here](#).

This week we work through Section XII, starting roughly here:

XII ... Now as to his statement that pleasure is decided by the senses themselves to be good, and pain to be evil, he allows more authority to the senses than our laws grant to us when we act as judges in private suits. For we are unable to decide anything, except that which falls within our jurisdiction. In this matter judges often uselessly add, in giving their decision, the words if a thing falls within my jurisdiction; since if the affair was not within their jurisdiction, the decision is none the more valid for the omission of the words. On what do the senses decide? On sweet and bitter, smooth and rough, nearness and distance, rest and motion, the rectangular form and the circular. Reason then will declare an unbiased opinion, aided first by the knowledge of all things human and divine, which may justly be called wisdom, then by the association of the virtues, which reason has appointed to be rulers over all things, you to be the attendants and handmaidens of the pleasures; truly then the opinion of all these will in the first place declare concerning pleasure that there is no chance for her, I will not say to occupy alone the throne of the supreme good, but none even for her to occupy it with morality in the way described. As to freedom from pain their opinion will be the same.

<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/57884944>

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3552-episode-203-cicero-s-on-ends-book-two-part-11-do-the-senses-have-jurisdiction-to/?postID=27697#post27697>