

Are the Gods Totally Painless? Does Calling Us To "Continuous Pleasure" Mean Totally Painless?

Post by "Cassius" of April 2, 2019 at 8:40 PM

It may be relevant to this that DeWitt pointed out that Epicurus himself did not call the gods "deathless" (at least as far as we know). This may be another area where DeWitt has an instinct to look for views of the gods that we would not expect at all. Is it possible that Epicureans gods are not only not 'deathless' by nature, but are also not 'painless' by nature? This is from page 416 as follows.

The gods are not by nature deathless. They were never called immortal by Epicurus himself, though they were by his followers.

The gods are animate creatures, resembling human beings, that is, atomic in composition and structure. As such they are theoretically not immune to the contingency of dissolution but in practice this event is avertible. Thus they may be styled incorruptible in the sense that they are subject to a contingency that need never occur.

All gods, however, are not of the same kind: some are composed of the same atoms at all times, like human beings; others are composed of like atoms by virtue of the perpetual afflux and efflux of atoms self-arranged in identical formations.

The gods can ensure incorruptibility for themselves by their own vigilance. Just as this vigilance ensures incorruptibility, so the assurance of incorruptibility ensures blissfulness. The happiness of the gods is perfect because the assurance of its perpetuity is perfect.