

Episode 207 - Cicero's On Ends - Book Two - Part 15 - Does Epicurean Philosophy Lead to Injustice?

Post by "Joshua" of December 30, 2023 at 3:44 PM

Thank you, [Matteng](#) ! I think the best text we have left regarding the Epicurean feeling of compassion for mankind is the Inscription of Diogenes of Oenoanda;

Quote

Fr. 30

... time ... and we contrived this in order that, even while [sitting at] home, [we might be able to exhibit] the goods of philosophy, not to all people here [indeed], but to those of them who are civil-spoken; and not least we did [this] for those who are called «foreigners,» though they are not really so. For, while the various segments of the earth give different people a different country, the whole compass of this world gives all people a single country, the entire earth, and a single home, the world.

Fr. 56

[So we shall not achieve wisdom universally], since not all are capable of it. But if we assume it to be possible, then truly the life of the gods will pass to men. For everything will be full of justice and mutual love, and there will come to be no need of fortifications or laws and all the things which we contrive on account of one another. As for the necessities derived from agriculture, since we shall have no slaves at that time (for indeed [we ourselves shall plough] and dig and tend [the plants] and [divert] rivers and watch over [the crops], we shall] ... such things as ... not ... time ..., and such activities, [in accordance with what is] needful, will interrupt the continuity of the [shared] study of philosophy; for [the] farming operations [will provide what our] nature wants.

But it isn't much, I grant you. The primary ethical mode of the Epicureans seems to be of the "teach a man to fish" variety; Lucretius' whole ethical project was more or less of that nature, whereby he brings good health to mankind through remedies that are philosophical rather than extrinsic.

When Julian the Apostate was trying to revive paganism after an interlude of Christian governance, he actually complained to his high priests that even pagan Romans were going to the Christians for charity rather than to the temples. We might consider this the practical result of 'taking no thought for the morrow', which, take it any way you like, is certainly not advice that Epicurus would condone. Security and self-sufficiency require taking thought for the morrow, and they are both natural goods.

Thread

[Natural Goods in Epicureanism](#)

The topic of natural goods briefly came up in last Wednesday's Zoom discussion. So thinking about what are natural goods within Epicureanism, as well as references such as the Principle Doctrines, etc.

It seems that friendship, freedom, and self-sufficiency are all natural goods, and there could be others?

Also, I just found this article (written in 2021) by Alex R. Gilham.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/27007901>

This article starts out with saying that pleasure is the only intrinsic good, but that...



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June 12, 2022 at 9:06 AM