

Episode 215 - Cicero's On Ends - Book Two - Part 22 - The Epicurean View Of Happiness

Post by "Joshua" of February 17, 2024 at 3:18 PM

DL: Injuries are done by men either through hate or through envy or through contempt, all of which the wise man overcomes by reasoning.

VS16: No one when he sees evil deliberately chooses it, but is enticed by it as being good in comparison with a greater evil and so pursues it.

DL: Sexual intercourse, they say, has never done a man good, and he is lucky if it has not harmed him.

Epicurus, *On the Telos*: I know not how to conceive the good, apart from the pleasures of taste, sexual pleasures, the pleasures of sound, and the pleasures of beautiful form.

(edit; this quote from DL also appears in Vatican Saying 51 as part of a longer text)

DL: He will be careful of his reputation in so far as to prevent himself from being despised.

[VS29](#): To speak frankly as I study nature I would prefer to speak in oracles that which is of advantage to all men even though it be understood by none, rather than to conform to popular opinion and thus gain the constant praise that comes from the many.

I don't mean to suggest that any of these should be taken as conclusive either way, but it is clear to me that Diogenes Laertius' summarizing merits a skeptical reading. Add to that the wide divergence among translators on very basic questions (will the wise man marry, or won't he?) and the picture grows rather muddled. I should be extremely hesitant to hang any given claim solely off what is written there. Usener in his *Epicurea* went even further than this in calling Laertius a 'complete ass'. Which is a touch uncharitable to my taste, but there you have it.