

# Article On Contemplation on the Gods

Post by “Joshua” of March 19, 2024 at 10:01 PM

I think the linked article is quite good. I haven't read the whole series, but it's a promising start, heavy on quotations to the relevant source texts.

## Quote

Before we start exploring this conception of divinity and how it leads to the Epicurean ideal of friendship, we should clarify a few things: the object of this article is not to defend the existence of the [Epicurean gods](#), for which there is obviously no evidence, nor point out any potential inconsistencies in their arguments concerning the gods.[4] In order to move forward, we can simply think of these gods as part of an ethical thought experiment that will lead to practical results on how we think about and experience our lives and our relationships.[5]

We start with a tentatively idealist approach to the question of the gods, which I think is more than fair. I know, for example, that a marble bust of Epicurus is of course *not* Epicurus himself, but it is nevertheless useful as a stimulant to thought and introspection. I'm happy to engage with the gods on this ground, and happy also to acknowledge that this is, for me, as far as it goes. The *Iliad* is a penetrating and insightful epic, resplendent with pride and pathos, even if every word of it is fiction; and I would be a beggarly wretch indeed if robbed of this and other literary majesties.

After some further comment, we get on to the bit about deconstructing our previous conceptions of the divine--and here I think there is a fork in the road. People are not all the same, and what works for one may be of little use to another; I think I am that kind of person for whom theory is more elemental, and even more real and tangible, than practice. This is paradox, of course, but I can summon to my defense in this case no other than the renowned Anglican apologist C. S. Lewis:

## Quote

I believe that many who find that "nothing happens" when they sit down, or kneel down, to a book of devotion, would find that the heart sings unbidden while they are working their way through a tough bit of theology with a pipe in their teeth and a pencil in their hand.

*-On the Incarnation*

As it happens, every word of this, right down to my former use of the tobacco pipe, is true to my experience.

Now I do not say that this is the best way to deconstruct one's former faith, but it is the one that works best for me. What we really need is an increased appreciation for the fact that people suffer and heal differently, stress and thrive differently, and that in the matter of a living philosophy one outline or summary or presentation rarely fits all.

All that being said, I think the article and the exercises are both good. 👍 (Again, I haven't read past the first linked page in the 5-part series.)