

# Episode 225 - Cicero's On Ends - Book Two - Part 30 - Cicero Argues That Commitment To Virtue Is A Bar To Pleasure

Post by "Cassius" of April 23, 2024 at 7:55 PM

So she's not offering just pleasure, but getting pleasure by apparently unjust means:

"Nay; you shall have the fruits of others' toil, and refrain from nothing that can bring you gain. For to my companions I give authority to pluck advantage where they will."

But interesting:

"Now when Heracles heard this, he asked, 'Lady, pray what is your name?'

"'My friends call me Happiness,' she said, 'but among those that hate me I am nicknamed Vice.'

And this does not strike me as simple "virtue" but more "common sense" or "the way things are" -

For of all things good and fair, the gods give nothing to man without toil and effort. If you want the favour of the gods, you must worship the gods: if you desire the love of friends, you must do good to your friends: if you covet honour from a city, you must aid that city: if you are fain to win the admiration of all [Hellas](#) for virtue, you must strive to do good to [Hellas](#): if you want land to yield you fruits in abundance, you must cultivate that land: if you are resolved to get wealth from flocks, you must care for those flocks: if you essay to grow great through war and want power to liberate your friends and subdue your foes, you must learn the arts of war from those who know them and must practise their right use: and if you want your body to be strong, you must accustom your body to be the servant of your mind, and train it with toil and sweat.'

And this is NOT the Epicurean approach to Pleasure:

[30] 'What good thing is thine, poor wretch, or what pleasant thing dost thou know, if thou wilt do nought to win them? Thou dost not even tarry for the desire of pleasant things, but fillest thyself with all things before thou desirest them, eating before thou art hungry, drinking before thou art thirsty, getting thee cooks, to give zest to eating, buying thee costly wines and running to and fro in search of snow in summer, to give zest to drinking; to soothe thy slumbers it is not enough for thee to buy soft coverlets, but thou must have frames for thy beds. For not toil, but the tedium of having nothing to do, makes thee long for sleep. Thou dost rouse lust by many a

trick, when there is no need, using men as women: thus thou trainest thy friends, waxing wanton by night, consuming in sleep the best hours of day.

So at least at this point I wouldn't see the ancient Epicureans seeing Hercules as an enemy, but someone else whose story has been distorted by religion and virtue.

Not sure about the rest.

So this is Socrates speaking to Aristippus himself?