

Episode 227 - Cicero's OTNOTG - 02 - Velleius Begins His Attack On Traditional Views Of The Gods

Post by "Cassius" of May 18, 2024 at 4:52 PM

[Quote from TauPhi](#)

To emulate anything we at the very least need to be exposed to it to have a vague idea of what we are supposed to be emulating. The only exposure in Epicureanism I'm aware of is 'eidola' and that is nothing more than: 'Hey, I imagined something so it must be true. From now on I will emulate it.' And with that approach I can only hope nobody starts imagining Freddie Kruger in a birthday balloon shop.

I think that objection is met by a rigorous application of what Epicurus said: believe NOTHING about them that is alien to incorruption or blessedness. I suspect this is where prolepsis comes in and the argument would be that it is no more appropriate to take from prolepsis that a god could be like Freddie Kruger than that oars when inserted in water are bent and when withdrawn from water return to their straight shape. Sure there are temporary "illusions" that cause some people at some times to form false opinions, when they don't apply prudent canonic to distinguish what they really know from what they don't, but these illusions are overcome by repeated rigorous observations -- and the same kind of repeated and rigorous examination of prolepsis leads to the conclusion that "blessedness" and "incorruptibility" do not comport with being a Freddie Kruger.

An awful lot of Epicurean philosophy depends on rigor in applying the fundamental premises. There are ONLY TWO FEELINGS, pleasure and pain, and if you don't *rigorously* apply that then you are going to spin your wheels forever on what "absence of pain" mean and fall into the trap of concluding that it means something other than pleasure.

If you don't *rigorously* apply proleptic concepts of blessedness and incorruptibility then you'll fall into the trap of thinking that *anything goes* and that a god could be like Freddie Kruger. Proper evaluation of prolepses leads to the conclusion that blessedness and incorruptibility involve self-sufficiency, happiness, and not playing enemies and favorites with others. Sure someone can argue over whether that assertion is correct, but they can also argue over whether oars get bent when they get placed in water. We all, in the end, have to make our own decisions about reality. Epicurus chooses to trust the senses, anticipations, and feelings, rather than to embrace skepticism or divine revelation or rationalism as replacing them.

And if you don't *rigorously* apply the viewpoint that some things are possible and some things are not possible, then you'll take the position that an infinity of time and boundlessness of space means that "anything goes." --- And on this last point I think that you and I are already

together that it most certainly does NOT mean that, and that "anything goes" as an argument for where life came from (as in that Intelligent Design article) would be a perversion of Epicurean philosophy.

It seems to me that someone suggesting that Freddie Kruger could be like a god would be met by a classical Epicurean with the same kind of heated reaction as suggesting that infinity means that "anything is possible." Both are nonsensical contentions. (blasphemy! 😊)

Letter to Menoecus [123] The things which I used unceasingly to commend to you, these do and practice, considering them to be the first principles of the good life. First of all believe that god is a being immortal and blessed, even as the common idea of a god is engraved on men's minds, and do not assign to him anything alien to his incorruption or ill-suited to his blessedness: but believe about him everything that can uphold his blessedness and incorruption.