

# Episode 241 - Cicero's OTNOTG 16 - A Common Thread Between The Epicurean View Of "The Gods" and "The Good"

Post by "Cassius" of August 15, 2024 at 9:15 AM

I would say we need to add "justice" to the same list of conceptual definitions that contains "the good," "gods," and "pleasure" (and no doubt the list goes on). One version of that list might be something like:

Concept	Epicurus' Definition / Explanation of the Concept
"the good" or "the highest good"	"this in the opinion of all philosophers must needs be <u>such that we are bound to test all things by it, but the standard itself by nothing.</u> " (Torquatus in On Ends 1)
"the highest good"	"The limit of quantity in pleasures is <u>the removal of all that is painful.</u> " <a href="#">PD03</a>
"gods"	"god is <u>a being immortal and blessed....</u> " (Letter to Menoecus) "By pleasure we mean <u>the absence of pain in the body and of trouble in the soul</u> " (Letter to Menoecus). "Wherever pleasure is present, as long as it is there, there is neither pain of body, nor of mind, nor of both at once." ( <a href="#">PD03</a> ) "For it would not wish for it for this reason, inasmuch as <u>whatever is free from pain is in pleasure.</u> " (On Ends 1:39) "Cicero: "...[B]ut unless you are extraordinarily obstinate you are bound to admit that 'freedom from pain' does not mean the same thing as 'pleasure.'" Torquatus: "Well but on this point you will find me obstinate, for it is as true as any proposition can be." (On Ends 2:9)
"pleasure"	"justice ... is <u>a kind of mutual advantage in the dealings of men with one another</u> " which is pretty much the same as "justice is <u>a kind of compact not to harm or be harmed.</u> "

Seems to me we have a similar problem involved in accepting the definitions of "gods" and "pleasure." it is so ingrained in us to accept "gods" as supernatural, and to accept "pleasure" as "limited to sensory stimulation" that we kick back against accepting the obvious meanings. The definitions are simple: "Gods" are simply any being that is totally happy and deathless, and "Pleasure" is any experience in life where pain is not present in that experience. The requirement of life, however, is that we apply these definitions to particular experiences, and that's a constantly moving target of dealing with particulars that don't always exactly fit within

our conceptual definitions. But if we didn't have the conceptual definitions we couldn't discuss or think or possibly make any progress toward them.