

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

Post by "Don" of August 15, 2024 at 11:45 PM

I said I was going to respond to some of @Twentier 's thoughts on prayer.

Let me say from the outset that I don't pray. I don't intend to pray, but I could see some use for it in the following ways... even *without believing in god or God or gods*.

It comes down to how one define's "prayer." If it is asking god/God for favors or bargaining with the deity ("Dear Lord, help me pass this test and I'll start going to Wednesday services.")... yeah, that's devoid of utility and basically empty.

However, to me, prayer can also be something like the meal-time "grace" that was used in the Buddhist Plum Village Center where the first line goes "We are thankful for this food, The work of many people and the sharing of other forms of life." It is a mind-shift to an attitude of gratitude. That kind of grateful-attitude form of prayer is in keeping with Epicurean tradition, from my perspective.

There's also contemplative prayer, concentrating or studying a specific text or phrase, sitting with it to really dig into it. POSSIBLY an Epicurean form of this is to contemplate what it means to be a "blessed and incorruptible being" and how that can be manifested in this mortal body and a materialistic world. This could also be an attitude-adjustment in that keeping in mind how a "blessed and incorruptible being" might move in the world and trying to emulate - to the best of one's mortal abilities - that behavior to be more "like a god."

These are off the top of my head. I also said above that "I don't intend to pray" but looking at what I've typed... who knows. Maybe I'll try one of those forms of "prayer" in the future after all.