

Clear But Not Convincing Evidence

Post by “Don” of October 21, 2024 at 10:11 PM

[Quote from Pacatus](#)

Wouldn't appeal to some common prolepsis (on the question of gods' existence) be subject to the *ad populum* fallacy?

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Argumentum_ad_populum

Frankly, I sometimes have that feeling, too; which is one of the reasons *I revert back* to emphasizing that a correct view of the gods, *Epicureanly-speaking*, for me is:

1. (If) gods exist, they did NOT create the universe nor do they supervise it nor do they sustain it.
2. (if) gods exist, they do not trouble themselves with human beings' actions.
 1. They do not bestow blessings; Good things do not flow as gifts from any gods
 2. They do not rain down curses; Bad things do not come as punishment from any gods.
 1. This seems to me the most important implication of [PD01](#)
 2. I also like VS65 *It is foolish to ask of the gods that which we can supply for ourselves.*
3. The only benefit realized by humans in relation to gods is as imagining them as the culmination of all the best things possible in life to their highest and most permanent degree.
4. Per Lucretius, Humans can personify and create metaphors using god-language: The crop is good = Demeter has blessed us; The wine makes me feel good = Dionysus has blessed this party!; He has died = He is with Hades now. Demeter, Dionysus, and Hades don't exist as beings, but they can exist as metaphor IF we remember they are metaphor.

I do not get hung up too much on the nature of the gods - What are the gods? What are they like? - but try to keep a correct understanding of the gods *in relation to me*. How should I conceive of divinity? For me, it is simply that - if external gods exist - these external gods have no power over me, no interest in me, and nothing to do with the ordering of the universe; any gods I conceive of should only be images, in my mind, of the best life possible... and then I can get on with imagining what that best life - the best mortal, human life - can be here now in reality and in the physical world... because this is all we got.