

Episode 251 - Cicero's OTNOTG 26 - How Niagara Falls Helps Us Understand the Flux, the Heap, and the Epicurean Gods

Post by “Don” of October 26, 2024 at 5:51 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

the passage can be reconciled with the rest of the philosophy without acknowledging that sensual pleasures are pleasure too.

Fully agree on this point! No disagreement here.

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Therefore I think the danger is on the other side - that of reading this passage as a blanket condemnation of sensual pleasures

I'll admit there's a danger of over-generalization here on the part of some (most?) readers. Even so, I don't read it as a condemnation of sensual pleasures. However, I read it as a warning that the pleasures over-indulged in by the prodigal are not choice-worthy *IF* those are the only pleasures you are experiencing AND the only pleasures you value are the those indulged in by those Epicurus would call ἄσωτος = (literally) not saved, abandoned; debauched, dissolute; profligate, spendthrift; and also extravagant, lavish, profuse, spend-thrift, wasteful. This ALL circles back to Epicurus' ideas like:

U490 He who needs tomorrow least, most gladly greets the coming day.

VS59 The stomach is not insatiable, as most people say; instead the opinion that the stomach needs unlimited filling is false.

From these, I see Epicurus saying that the person who doesn't feel the need to eat and drink lavishly continuously, better appreciates it and enjoys when the opportunity arises. If you live lavishly and indulge in ONLY extravagant physical pleasures, you'll get bored, nauseated, sick, lose friends, etc.