

# Nothing Ain't Worth Nothing....

**Post by "Cassius" of November 6, 2024 at 9:51 AM**

I raise that last question because of a part of a discussion we had I think in a recent Zoom:

How tightly is "Nothing comes from Nothing" tied to "Atomism?"

"Atomism" seems to postulate that the way the universe works with regularity is that there are eternal irreducible particles which when moving through empty space come together to form bodies, and that this process explains and underlies the regularity of all that we see.

Would a "plenum" (no empty space anywhere) work just as well?

If not, why not?

One thing I'll suggest for sure: Just as in the issue of life in the rest of the universe and whether humans are the longest living and happiest forms of life, it's not sufficient from Epicurus' point of view to say "I don't know and I'm not going to think about it." It's important to have a working theory that makes sense to support whatever position you want to take, otherwise you're just a Socratic "I don't know anything except that I don't know anything" gadfly.

Same goes in the field of "do gods exist?"

And in my view we have painful proof of why it's important to take a position:

When the claims of Judaism-Christianism intellectually conquered the ancient world, the Academic-Skeptic position of "I don't know whether you're right or wrong because it's impossible to ever be sure of anything" didn't have the intellectual/emotional force to prevail in the battle of ideas. Radical skepticism simply doesn't win minds or hearts.

As Nietzsche said in his "Anti-Christ," Epicurus was working in a direction which, if it had been more widely adopted, would have given the ancient world more fortitude to stand up to the claims of Judeo-Christianism. Just like the Epicureans were the ones who stood up against the claims of Alexander the Oracle-Monger, you need a philosophy that gives you confidence to stand up against claims of the supernatural, and "I think you're wrong but I don't know anything about anything" doesn't cut it.

Epicurus choose atomism and his view of gods as a logical and defensible high-level position about how things really are. This gave him the ability to say to his opponents, "You're wrong on certain important claims, and here's why."

So if you're going to take the position that "nothing comes from nothing" then you need to offer a plausible explanation to explain why. Is atomism required for that? Would a "plenum" work just as well? I think it would be very interesting to try to reconstruct why Epicurus chose

atomism.