

# Episode One Hundred Forty - The Letter to Menoecus 07 - Completion of the Letter

Post by "Julia" of November 8, 2024 at 9:53 AM

## [Quote from Cassius](#)

Is that ("finding the truth and saying it is xyz") not exactly what Epicurus does when he says things like:

It is; however (and I will use "dogmatic" in the modern sense here):

1. It's one thing to say "Nature shows that..." and another thing to say "I command that...".
2. Epicurus was not dogmatic such as to shut down any discussion; nor was he dogmatically closed-minded, ever willfully ignorant of evidence that might persuade him to change his position.
3. Epicurus was dogmatic about that we ought to think for ourselves, use our own sources of evidence (senses/feelings/anticipations) and our own mental faculties in the proper way (how to think). As such, he was dogmatically anti-ideological.

Do you see the difference? Epicurus was like maths, in the sense that mathematics is dogmatic about the fact that  $2+2=4$  and that everything else is, by necessity, wrong – but this follows clearly from the assumptions (which take the place of the canon), and it is reasoned with proper logic, not with magical thinking or invocation of authority; and anyone is welcome to debate the issue, try to make their case for  $2+2=5$  as best they can (and be proven wrong).

The leaders of organised religions do not give reasons, not even if they change their mind (eg Papal infallibility), and they do not permit doubt, not even with good evidence (eg Giordano Bruno). They simply assert out of the blue, and that's the end of it. They invoke authority.

Did Epicurus say: "[Death is nothing to us](#) because I said so"?

Did he say: "There are infinitely many atoms because the gods told me they tried to count them but couldn't"?

The "dogmatism" of Epicurean philosophy is neither authoritarian nor prescriptive, and as such has nothing to do with that of organised religions or contemporary ideologies, other than having historically been called using the same word, which has since shifted meaning considerably. This difference in the type of "dogmatism" is analogous to that of mathematics versus organised religion/modern ideology.