

Article: "Extraterrestrial Life May Look Nothing Like Life On Earth..." (and for our purposes, applying the article to "gods")

Post by "Don" of December 14, 2024 at 12:09 AM

I just came across this quickly-escalating conversation and have thoughts.

I find myself aligned with [TauPhi](#) 's direction here as I read it. Correct me if I'm wrong, but paraphrasing his stance as I understand it (and Epicurean theology) with some of my own perspective mixed in:

The gods (whether thought constructs or physical beings) are not above or outside nature; they have no concerns for humans and do not bestow blessings or rain down punishment. Those seem to be the points of paramount importance to Epicurus. We have nothing to fear from gods (no matter how they exist).

The gods do not interfere with humans, have no need of humans, live in bliss, and are incorruptible.

Going from [TauPhi](#)'s points with my own direction: The gods have no concern for humans; however, if humans were to try to contact gods or come into physical contact with them... the gods would necessarily be troubled by humans. This seems to me to be counter to Epicurean theology. If we wish to be "god-like" in an Epicurean sense, we should not bother the gods: "That which is blissful and immortal *has no troubles itself, nor does it cause trouble for others*, so that it is not affected by anger or gratitude (for all such things come about through weakness)." If we trouble or annoy the gods by going around poking them, prodding them, trying to contact them, by definition, we not acting as an Epicurean god. Leave them be, and admire their blessedness within our minds, contemplate their blessedness and incorruptibility.

On the Gods as Aliens...

I have no problem whatsoever thining that Epicurus would be interested to learn his idea of the universe was not as he had envisioned it. Knowing how the universe was put together and seeing other stars and worlds around those stars would further solidify his resolve that there was nothing to fear outside of the universe and that natural laws governed the universe and not a supernatural intelligence. He might even have been curious to entertain the multiverse/bubble universe concepts. If aliens contacted Earth, he would probably shrug and say, "I knew it would happen eventually." But those aliens are NEVER going to be [Epicurean gods](#). By definition, if they concern themselves with humans, they aren't gods. "That which is blissful and immortal has no troubles itself, nor does it cause trouble for others."

For anyone curious about my general stance on Epicurean theology, listen to our recent podcast episode on the idealist vs realist god stances, or think of it as "thought-construct" vs "physical being" debate. I don't think the gods have a corporeal form, visible to the eye, able to be touched. I think they are mental constructions of the ideal existence put into a form by the mind to be able to comprehend and think about a blessed and incorruptible state.

I don't think astrobiology has anything to say about Epicurean theology.

I do think astrobiology has everything to do with Epicurus' theory that multiple worlds exist and that other beings exist on those other worlds. I do **not** think that Epicurus would say those other beings on other worlds are gods. Go ahead and contact the other beings, by all means. Teach them about Epicurus and learn from their "Epicurus." There could very well be an alien "Epicurus" since I could easily see "pleasure-seeking" a universal trait of life. But they're not gods.