

"Pleasure" vs "Pleasant Experiences"

Post by "Joshua" of February 6, 2025 at 1:54 PM

Quote from Usener Fragment 67

"For I at least do not even know what I should conceive the good to be, if I eliminate the pleasures of taste, and eliminate the pleasures of sex, and eliminate the pleasures of listening, and eliminate the pleasant motions caused in our vision by a visible form."

Whenever we discuss the Letter to Menoikeus, I feel it's important to contrast it with what Epicurus wrote in the above surviving fragment from a lost work *Peri Telos*, "On the End". For this and other reasons, I am unwilling to cede the word *pleasure* to the naysayers. We lose far more than we stand to gain. Lucretius sets the tone for me: *dux vitae dia voluptas*; Divine Pleasure, the guide of life.

If people hear 'pleasure' and think 'bodily pleasure', I do not regard that as a problem - mainly because I think those people are probably motivated to this misinterpretation by religion or politics or culture or upbringing, and they would reject Epicureanism no matter how thoroughly it was explained to them.