

Brochure By AxA - Toronto

Post by "Cassius" of February 19, 2025 at 8:56 AM

To follow up on what Kalosyni asked above, I see that we have here on the website as Vatican Saying 4:

VS04. All bodily suffering is negligible; for that which causes acute pain has short duration, and that which endures long in the flesh causes but mild pain. Note 4: Alternate: All bodily suffering is easy to disregard: for that which causes acute pain has short duration, and that which endures long in the flesh causes but mild pain.

However Principal Doctrine 4 we have:

[PD04](#). Pain does not last continuously in the flesh, but the acutest pain is there for a very short time, and even that which just exceeds the pleasure in the flesh does not continue for many days at once. But chronic illnesses permit a predominance of pleasure over pain in the flesh.

I was thinking that all of the first set of doctrines, including 4, were exactly the same, but apparently there's a significant difference in that opening phrase. (And checking Bailey's extant remains, I see that of the first 8, he reprints 4 and 7 as being different. Bailey uses "negligible.")

It's possible that we've discussed this before but I don't recall. Do [Don](#) or [Bryan](#) (who I perceive to be our current best translators) have any comment on this opening phrasing (negligible / disregard / despise) in VS4?

In general I see the PD's are more reliable than the Vatican Sayings, and because I think PD3 makes a point that is much more like Epicurean thinking, I think it's noncontroversial why [PD03](#) is phrased as it is.

But the translations of VS04 are more questionable, even though arguable. There are numbers of relevant cites, including Torquatus saying that mental pleasures and pains are regularly more intense than bodily ones. However some of these translations veer toward flippancy in a way that might not be appropriate. If there are translation options that would bring it more in line with Epicurus' standard level of compassion, those might be preferable. Epicurus didn't call his own pain of his last day "negligible" or "easy to disregard," but he did say that he was still happy at offsetting his joy against it.

I wouldn't call that "disregarding" the pain, or classifying it as negligible either. "Despising" the pain as an evaluation of it might actually be slightly better, and also more consistent with the way Epicurus says to treat bad habits as men who have long caused us harm.

Any thoughts?