

## **VS27 - Does all fruit come "painfully"?**

**Post by "Cassius" of May 31, 2019 at 7:34 PM**

I think this from Diogenes of Oinoanda is relevant to Elli's point. It shows how in some things, like philosophy - and engaging in acts that are virtuous in the Epicurean model - the pleasure of engaging in the act coincides in time with the act of participating in it. One implication is that we never experience this type of pleasure unless we engage in the act that brings it about. If we refrain from that action - if we instead seek nothing more than "absence of pain" - then that type of pleasure is never available to us:

" I want now to get rid of the error, prevalent among you along with others, concerning the same emotion, and especially to speak against one doctrine of yours, Stoics. My argument is as follows: not all causes in things precede their effects, even if the majority do, but some of them precede their effects, others coincide with them, and others follow them.

Examples of causes that precede are cautery and surgery saving life: in these cases extreme pain must be borne, and it is after this that pleasure quickly follows.

Examples of coincident causes are solid and liquid nourishment and, in addition to these, sexual acts: we do not eat food and experience pleasure afterwards, nor do we drink wine and experience pleasure afterwards, nor do we emit semen and experience pleasure afterwards; rather the action brings about these pleasures for us immediately, without awaiting the future.

As for causes that follow, an example is expecting to win praise after death: although men experience pleasure now because there will be a favourable memory of them after they have gone, nevertheless the cause of the pleasure occurs later.

Now you, being unable to mark off these distinctions, and being unaware that the virtues have a place among the causes that coincide with their effects (for they are borne along with pleasure), go completely astray."