

Life Found Elsewhere?

Post by "Cassius" of April 17, 2025 at 8:14 AM

That question would be similar to:

"What would happen if we found that there is a tribe of pink elephants living underground on the other side of the moon and that they created the universe?"

In other words, such a question is absurd because it violates what we are confident about as to the universe, such as that it is not supernatural, that it operates on natural processes of which there is no reason to suspect a supernatural limit, that we observe nature to never make a single thing of kind, that we expect the universe is eternal and that possible combinations of atoms have been continuing infinitely into space and eternally back in time, etc.

This is why canonics / epistemology is much more important an aspect of Epicurean philosophy even than the ethics -- you can't be confident of anything if you don't have a position on when to be confident of something.

Plato taught that nothing is certain except the eternal forms in another dimension. Aristotle taught a watered down version of the same thing. Religion often teaches that only god knows what is right and wrong.

Epicurus teaches that knowledge is possible through the senses, anticipations, and feelings, and that living successfully depends on having confidence in those faculties. And as a result, once we become confident of something like the existence of atoms, or the infinity of worlds and life not limited to earth, we don't even entertain the possibility of those conclusions being invalidated absent some persuasive evidence to the contrary. As we have absolutely no reason to expect that persuasive evidence to the contrary exists, we disregard that possibility. To do otherwise leads to absolute skepticism, which Epicurus campaigns against as much as any other error.