

Confusion: "The feelings are only two"

Post by "Cassius" of May 27, 2025 at 1:12 PM

For example Rolf:

10.2. THE DOUBLE CHOICE

The first and foremost refinement of the topic in the hands of Epicurus was to draw a clear distinction between choosing an attitude, diathesis, toward action in a given sphere and choosing to do or not to do a given thing within that field. For example, a man must first choose what attitude he shall assume toward death and the gods, pleasure and pain, Necessity, Fortune, political life, monarchy, fame, friendship, diet, and several others. To exemplify from this list, the right attitude toward Necessity is to deny it, toward Fortune to defy her, toward political life to avoid it, toward fame to ignore it, and toward friendship to look upon it as the most precious of all the acquisitions of the wise man. The famous collection known as the Authorized Doctrines is rightly understood as a guide for the choice of attitudes toward the essential things in the art of living happily. The first, for instance, advises the disciple that the gods are not to be feared. This is an attitude, which is first to be chosen and then cultivated.

The choice of attitude, however, by no means abolished the necessity of making individual choices. The proper attitude toward pain, for instance, is to regard it as inherently evil and to be avoided; nevertheless, in the individual case the lesser pain, such as that of the surgeon's knife, is endured for the sake of the greater good. Again, the proper attitude toward food is to prefer a simple diet, but this does not preclude and even approves the occasional indulgence. Neither is political life to be avoided under all circumstances; the evil is not in such a life itself but in surrendering freedom by making a career of it. Thus in spite of the choices of attitude the necessity of making the individual choice is perpetual.