

Epicurean Isonomy In The Context Of Statements By Balbus As To Gradations In Life In Book 2 of "On the Nature of the Gods"

Post by "Cassius" of August 10, 2025 at 3:34 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

It seems to me that "universals" is simply a high falutin' way of recognizing patterns across disparate individual entities, physical or abstract. To me, that sounds like the faculty of prolepsis and not some complicated philosophical construct.

Yes I agree that's the basic point, stated in a very friendly way.

Stated more pointedly, there's a huge "life or death" divide between (1) the desire to look for universals in other worlds of ideal forms or divine aspects of this world, and (2) the desire to look for the best way of life in natural processes that are open to any normal human being with no requirement of priest or expert to explain it to you.

In my view an awful lot of the division between Epicurus and the other schools comes down to exactly this. Epicurus' opponents identified exactly this issue very early on, and they have treated him and his philosophy in a very unfriendly way for 2000+ years as a result.

As long as the discussion stays within the guard rails of "being happy" or "finding pleasure through simplicity," it's all fun and games and smiles.

Go much deeper than that, however, in discussion of Epicurus with an intellectual activist, and you'll find out what that activist really cares about, and it's not how best to balance pleasure and pain. That's why all this is so important.