

Episode 294 - TD24 - Distinguishing Dogs From Wolves And Pleasure From Absence of Pain

Post by "Cassius" of August 11, 2025 at 8:15 PM

Here's a note which will unfortunately probably not make sense until the episode is released, but I want to come back to it:

Near the end of the episode Joshua and I read two sections from "Academnic Questions" in which Cicero (actually his hero Antiochus) is criticizing use of the sorites method of argument. Within that passage there is a section that also criticizes the Dialecticians. It gets pretty subtle as to which side Cicero is on, but I gather that what is probably going on here is that Cicero is in fact criticizing the claims of Dialectics (such as I gather the Stoics was making) as sufficient to find truth. In other words, I am taking this as Cicero taking the side of Skepticism, and criticizing the claims even of the dialecticians to establish truth through wordplay. That would likely be a criticism with which the Epicureans would agree, but of course from this skeptical point of view Cicero/Antiochus is arguing against anyone's claim to know anything with confidence.

If upon hearing the episode some hears a different point, please let me know. Here are the two sections from which we were quoting:

Posts one and three in this thread:

Thread

[Epicurus' Response To The Sorites Argument / Paradox](#)

Background note: *(The Sorites paradox (from the Megarian/Stoic tradition) asked: if you remove one grain from a heap, is it still a heap? And another? At what point does it cease to be a heap? Epicurus rejected the entire framework as a linguistic trap rather than a genuine metaphysical problem. His response was characteristically empiricist: the Canon (sensation, prolepsis, feelings) determines what we mean by concepts, and when a question pushes beyond what the Canon can adjudicate, the...*



Cassius

March 18, 2025 at 4:47 PM