

# Beyond Stoicism (2025)

Post by "Cassius" of August 12, 2025 at 10:04 AM

Also Don, I think an effective counterpoint to the modern implications of "flee" (that you are running away in fear, even panic, as if someone had yelled "fire" in a theatre) I would use what you have cited from the last day of Epicurus as to arraying pleasure against pain, as in a battle.

To me a battle or opposition analogy is much more indicative of the real meaning. The word isn't by any means wide enough to cover your actions toward pain pain in every instance, because sometimes you are actually *choosing* pain.

So I can see why the translators might use choose and *avoid*, as avoid doesn't have the fear and panic associations. "Avoid" has other negative connotations of its own, however, such as a certain lack of "seriousness" as if your action is a matter of mild preference as opposed to something important.

In the end just like in so many cases words have many connotations, some accurate and intended and some not, so it's always a matter of taking care to explain when there is ambiguity.

And I would say that to take the full modern understanding of "fleeing" from pain at face value would be a huge misreading. Epicurus didn't "flee" from the gods, he stood up to them, worked to understand them, and actually embraced certain aspects of them. And as a generalization that kind of face-up-to-it -and-overcome-it where-necessary attitude is a lot more accurate picture of the correct attitude toward pain than the single word "fleeing" can convey.

flee

**verb** [ I or T, never passive ]

**us** /fli:/ **uk** /fli:/present participle **fleeing** | past tense and past participle **fled**

**Add to word list**

**C1**

**to escape by running away, especially because of danger or fear:**

**flee from** *She fled from the room in tears.*

**flee to** *In order to escape capture, he fled to the mountains.*