

Welcome Wbernys!

Post by "Don" of October 7, 2025 at 10:15 PM

[Quote from wbernys](#)

I would also like to ask a question for those who don't mind on "atoms and void". From what i can tell science tells us that the space between atoms is not really "empty space" but more like energy (electromagnetic, gravitational energy, quantum waves) which provided no friction and has no form, thus allowing movement. Do you all consider this to be a kind of "Epicurean void" or do you still believe in the classical void that there's empty space in-between?

My perspective on "atoms and void" are that, most importantly, Epicurus was not - and could not be - talking about [the modern Standard Model](#) of particle physics. The parallels between Epicurus' "ἄτομος" and the modern "atom" should not be taken too literally. They can be taken figuratively or metaphorically though.

Epicurus use of the term ἄτομος (atomos) conveyed that there were indivisible fundamental material "things" that were not capable of being cut/divided into smaller pieces that made up all the material things we see around us throughout the cosmos and, indeed, the entire universe. Not tinier and tinier replicas of the things themselves (bones are not made of tiny bones) or similar ideas. He didn't see only four elements: fire, earth, air, water, with one being predominant. Epicurus genius insight was that these atomoi could make up an infinite number of different things, things that would be eventually broken down into their constitute atomoi, reconstituted as something else, and the cycle goes on and on ad infinitum, forward and back.

The modern Standard Theory has gone beyond Epicurus, but - from my perspective again - has built on Epicurus' ideas (via Lucretius primarily and the Renaissance scholars that read him). As the CERN site says: "The theories and discoveries of thousands of physicists since the 1930s have resulted in a remarkable insight into the fundamental structure of matter: everything in the universe is found to be made from a few basic building blocks called fundamental particles, governed by four fundamental forces." On face value, that insight is remarkably similar - in the BROADEST and most GENERAL sense - to Epicurus' insights 2,000+ years ago. But only in the BROADEST and most GENERAL way. I can't emphasize that enough.

So, to be an Epicurean - again from my perspective - means to accept that we live in a physical, material universe made up of fundamental particles governed by understandable principles. We should not feel compelled to adhere to ideas that are millennia old. But in the broadest sense, I have no problem with the idea of "atoms and void" as a general metaphorical phrase as long as I understand it to be pointing to fundamental particles making up the physical universe, moving through "space" however you'd like to understand that.