

Welcome Wbernys!

Post by “Joshua” of October 7, 2025 at 10:35 PM

Welcome!

Regarding the gods, the size of the sun, and the findings of modern physics, these are questions of perennial interest around here.

My own view is this: if I am going to hold forth as an Epicurean, I have an obligation to try to *understand* his system of thought to the best of my ability. When I am trying to explain Epicureanism to others, I try to explain it the way I think Epicurus himself understood it. I don't always succeed in presenting it well, or accurately, but I try never to intentionally *misrepresent*.

That being said, I do not feel obligated to agree with the ancients on every point; and when I am stating my own views, I try to make it clear that that's what I'm doing.

To quote Thoreau, the cart before the horse is neither useful nor beautiful. The philosophy of Epicurus is not best understood as a set of pass/fail litmus tests.

Quote

XIII. Those who place the Chief Good in virtue alone are beguiled by the glamour of a name, and do not understand the true demands of nature. If they will consent to listen to Epicurus, they will be delivered from the grossest error. Your school dilates on the transcendent beauty of the virtues; but were they not productive of pleasure, who would deem them either praiseworthy or desirable? We esteem the art of medicine not for its interest as a science, but for its conduciveness to health; the art of navigation is commended for its practical and not its scientific value, because it conveys the rules for sailing a ship with success. So also Wisdom, which must be considered as the art of living, if it effected no result would not be desired; but as it is, it is desired, because it is the artificer that procures and produces pleasure.

-Torquatus, Cicero's *On Ends*