

# Any Recommendations on “The Oxford Handbook of Epicurus and Epicureanism”?

Post by “Patrikios” of November 9, 2025 at 12:52 PM

[TauPhi](#) , and [Matteng](#) , thank you for your comments and encouragement on the chapters.

The Oxford Handbook is a collection of papers by different authors, vs the DeWitt single author approach, to encompass the breadth of Epicurus history and Epicureanism philosophy. So, I am delving into separate chapters to gain insight into some key topics.

For example, Chapter 5. Theology goes into great length on explaining the nature of [Epicurean gods](#) (elaborating on KD01) and explaining the 'prolepsis of the gods'. I was particularly helped by this explanation in the section, "**The Ethical Meaning of Epicurean Theology**"

Quote

*The simulacra of the gods, then, bring benefits, and thus to participate in prayers and in religious ceremonies (cf. Diog. Oen. fr. 19 II 6–11 Smith) means to “interiorize” in an effective way the (pleasurable) divine simulacra and to put into practice the commitment to become like a god among men.*

What this means to me is that when I do my deep meditation and contemplate on the blessedness and incorruptibility of the 'gods', I am better able to understand what the 'divine simulacra' are implanting in my mind. The text in this chapter makes clear that our knowledge of [Epicurean gods](#) comes through prolepsis—a criterion of truth formed by repeated perceptions of divine simulacra striking our minds. When I practice my repeated meditation, I can focus contemplating how [Epicurean gods](#) are **beings** who are genuinely **incorruptible** (aphtharsia) and **blessed** (makariotēs). The prolepsis contains the essential characteristics: gods as living beings free from perturbation, experiencing continuous atomic replenishment that prevents their dissolution. My goal isn't worship in the traditional sense, but assimilation of the feelings—how it feels to live "**like a god among men**".