

# Episode 334 - EATAQ 16 - Further Epicurean Analysis of the Problems With The Stoic "Kataleptic Impression"

Post by "Bryan" of May 17, 2026 at 11:32 AM

We can review Zeno of Citium's "Analogy of the Closing Hand" for contrast (from *Academica* 2.145):

1. An open hand represents **φαντασία** (an appearance)
2. Partially closed fingers represent **συγκατάθεσις** (assent that the appearance is true)
3. A closed fist represents **κατάληψις** (thorough comprehension),
4. Finally, the other hand enclosing the fist represents **ἐπιστήμη** (understanding) - true knowledge, possessed only by the wise.

This is contrasted (*Academica* 2.142) with "a different judgment exists for Epicurus - who thinks all judgment is established in the senses, in the acquaintance with things, and in pleasure"

## [Quote from Don](#)

I think it's hiding in other forms within the texts.

Yes, Epicurus uses the verbal form of **κατάληψις**, for example at 10.78b he says:

"καὶ τοῦτο **καταλαβεῖν** τῇ διανοίᾳ ἔστιν ἀπλῶς εἶναι"

"...and to **thoroughly comprehend** with the mind that this [reality] exists is absolutely possible."

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10.125a. "Οὐθὲν γὰρ ἔστιν ἐν τῷ ζῆνδεινὸν **τῷ κατειληφῶτι** γνησίως τὸ μηδὲν ὑπάρχειν ἐν τῷ μὴ ζῆνδεινόν"

"Nothing is terrible in living **for the one who has thoroughly comprehended**, in a genuine way, that nothing exists as terrible in not living."

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Philodemus, On Piety, 1.66A.1882-1911 "καὶ καθάπερ κἀν τῷ δευτέρῳ καὶ τριακοστῷ, καὶ τῶν θεῶν Ἐναργεῖαι, Φησὶν, **καταλαμβάνεσθαι** τὸ ὄν"

"and just as in the Second-and-Thirtieth [book 32 On Nature, Epicurus] says, the evident Realities of the gods **are thoroughly comprehended** as existing"

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Interestingly we have both prefixes in "προ-κατα-λαμβάνειν," which is best read as intensifying προ-λαμβάνειν (thus meaning "**thoroughly anticipated**" and not "**comprehended**")

VS 47 "Προκατείλημμαί σε - ὦ Τύχη!"

"I have thoroughly anticipated you - O Chance!"

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