

Discussion of the thread - Against Katastematic Supremacy - Pleasure Is A Unified Whole And Not A House Divided - Forum Editorial Policy

Post by "Cassius" of August 4, 2026 at 2:33 PM

Let me expand and double down on this:

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Epicurus says all pleasures are desirable --- he never says all pleasures are EQUALLY desirable, and indeed it would be ridiculous to say so.

So yes as far as I can tell Epicurus never says that all pleasures are equally desirable, any more than he says that all pains are equally undesirable. It would be ludicrous to take those positions, but the *improper interpretation of absence of pain is leading directly to that result.*

People are talking as if Epicurus were defining a particular experience, rather than a particular context, as "the best pleasure" or "the highest pleasure" and so they are demoting all other analysis of how to rank pleasures and pains as if to do so were meaningless. When you imply that the single goal is "absence of pain" then you are start talking as if it makes no difference which pleasures take the place of the pain that they displace, which again I will say is so nonsensical that the important texts that survive make no mention of such a counterintuitive concept.

And yet today all you hear is that the most minimal pleasures are all we should care about, even though Epicurus specifically said something entirely different. We do not seek to be free to walk away from pleasures whenever we like not that we may at all times enjoy but a few things, but that so that we won't feel painful longing if circumstances require that we go without them.

And again independence of desire we think a great good — not that we may at all times enjoy but a few things, but that, if we do not possess many, we may enjoy the few in the genuine persuasion that those have the sweetest pleasure in luxury who least need it, and that all that is natural is easy to be obtained, but that which is superfluous is hard

And this very kind of discussion shows that Epicurus was very well aware that all pleasures are not exactly the same and totally interchangeable.