

Against the stoics

Post by "Cassius" of October 3, 2019 at 9:19 PM

AZ -- Yes the Stoic universe presumes a providence and without one their system would fall apart, and they would have no goal - which I guess is why they insist on Providence.

As to "long term pleasure as the sole good" that probably needs thought. As I mentioned in another recent thread some of us have been debating precisely that issue. I have used the term "long term pleasure" regularly myself, but I am getting more careful about it. Epicurus clearly says in the letter to Menoeceus that

"

And just as with food he does not seek simply the larger share and nothing else, but rather the most pleasant, so he seeks to enjoy not the longest period of time, but the most pleasant."

So I think we need to be careful assuming that we can describe the goal as "long term pleasure." It is probably more accurate to say simply "Pleasure" for that reason, or to try to find modifiers such as "net pleasure" or "maximum pleasure" that do not indicate that time is the key factor. In fact we probably need to consider that it is hard to pin down what the key factor is, if not time. Is it "intensity?" Is it "percentage of experience?" Or what?

Pleasure being a feeling it is hard (impossible?) to reduce it to a measurement in terms of time, or space, or some other outside measurement.

Presumably that is why Epicurus generally talks about "pleasure" as the goal and does not combine it with some other form of limiting or modifying adjective.

This is interesting to think and talk about.