

Epicurus, gods and God

Post by “Elayne” of October 18, 2019 at 6:09 PM

Has been a busy week for me, catching up, but I want to thank Elli also for that help with the translation, which makes so much more sense!

Clarity of language is important, and because the word "gods" in English currently means supernatural, in English I am an atheist: I do not believe in the supernatural. I was raised atheist, in Alabama, and in English the word is used accurately for that specific meaning. I'm not going to use a different term in ordinary contexts, or people will think I'm a supernaturalist. It would be poor communication.

However, in Greek, and in regards to Epicurean philosophy, and among people who understand my words, I am not an atheist, because I know we've already taken the supernatural off the table. It seems entirely reasonable to suspect that in all of reality, there are likely beings which evolved to live pleurably to such a high degree that they would amaze me if I saw them. And if I think about how such beings would conduct their lives with each other, it helps me continue to choose that life myself-- not as an abstraction but as a practical, achievable process. We must believe a pleasurable life is possible or there would be no point trying. In this sense, I am a believer.