

Pleasure vs Happiness (?) Discussion of Hiram's "In Defense of Eudaimonia"

Post by "Todd" of October 20, 2019 at 6:08 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Epicurus used the word eudaimonia himself, but had his own definition and context, just as he had for "gods."

How do you reconcile this with Epicurus' advocacy of clarity of language, and using words in the sense that immediately comes to mind?

(His refusal to even define pleasure is a wonderful example, by the way.)

I have no doubt that other Greek philosophers, and maybe even later Epicureans, were debating the definition of *eudaimonia*, but I suspect Epicurus would not have used it if his meaning was liable to be misunderstood by the average Greek of his day.

Now, possibly *eudaimonia* does not translate precisely to what we (modern non-academics) understand by "happiness", but given the usual contexts, that translation seems quite reasonable to me, and unobjectionable in relation to the rest of Epicurus' philosophy.

As for "gods"...yes, it does seem that he is using that term to mean something rather different than what the average person would have understood. But then, he also wrote entire books to explain his ideas. Also, I've noticed that in some places the translation is "immortal beings" rather than "gods". Could it be that he chose that phrase instead of "gods" deliberately?

Sorry if this is a bit of a side-track to this thread. I just couldn't let your statement pass without comment! 😊