

On the nature of a god

Post by "Michael" of November 2, 2019 at 10:47 AM

To a modern person most familiar with Christianity and kindred religions, [Epicurean gods](#) can seem very odd. Defining characteristics given to a god by Christians and others are lacking in those of the Epicureans. They are not omnibenevolent, omniscient nor omnipotent. In fairness, this makes them far more defensible as being real. Yet it also raises the question as to just what distinguishes gods from mortals. An obvious attribute that is shared with the Abrahamic God is their immortality. Their eternal blissfulness might be another, though the Abrahamic God seems less than this in many depictions. Regardless, it seems that a human or other mortal being could in theory also achieve this state. After all, the gods in Epicureanism were formally mortal or at least descend from them. For my part, I think if beings like this exist, as seems quite possible elsewhere in the vast universe, there is little use in worshiping them. I don't know precisely what the Epicureans might be worship though. Was it merely holding them as an ideal to look up to? That at least could be sensible, though I don't know that it's what everyone would call "worship". There is also the issue of whether such beings should be called "gods" and not blissful, immortal space aliens. Perhaps that is a semantic issue, though I'd favor not labeling them gods because there is no clear dividing line between them and other beings, since they too are material, while coming from mortal origins. However, to those who aspire for that state they (or the idea) can serve as an ideal. I personally do not aspire to that, and in any case all of us here doubtless will not live to see such an achievement.

P.S. Please correct me if I've gotten any aspect of the Epicurean view on the gods incorrect here.