

# Discussion of the Society of Epicurus' 20 Tenets of 12/21/19

**Post by "Elayne" of December 23, 2019 at 5:44 PM**

On 12, regarding the gods, I would not agree that idealist interpretations are coherent with Epicurean Philosophy. He was opposed to that kind of thing.

I would take him at his word, that he intuited the existence of material beings who experienced maximum pleasure.

For myself, here is my innovation, which I do not consider incoherent with the philosophy. I don't think whether those beings exist as he described or not is a structural pillar. If he had never said it, I don't think any of the rest would be damaged. I think it is sufficient to say that not having to worry about supernatural beings at all prevents me from worrying about the stuff people worried about in his time. I am not closed to the possibility of there being some ETs out there who live as he described-- I don't see what would make it impossible, and no supernatural magic would be necessary.

However, for me, the most important part is the reminder that the degree of pleasure of our lives is on a spectrum, and right in front of me I can see that some are more skilled than others at getting it. So the part about "living as gods among men" is the most relevant, and it is pragmatically achievable right here on our planet.

If I wrote any Tenet about it, it would be not to insult Epicurus by saying he might have been lying about the gods or that he meant something different than what he said. And I would not require any member to believe in the gods as he described them, despite that being a difference with Epicurus, but I would not allow the substitution of an ideal or a metaphor. The same as we now know more about the sun-- there's no need to say he was lying about that or using a metaphor-- he was incorrect. I don't know that he was incorrect about his gods, but he might be, and I think that is acceptable to say.