

# Glossary - What is the Epicurean Definition of "Pleasure?"

**Post by "Mike Anyayahan" of January 16, 2020 at 11:36 PM**

I guess it's not wrong to believe that the word happiness that is repeatedly used across Epicurus works is Eudaimonia. I don't think of any problem with it so long as we understand that the highest good is pleasure and not happiness. The important thing is that we are aware that the relationship between the two makes each other like identical. Torquatus said that "to live happily is nothing except to live with pleasure."

Even Aristotle said that happiness "...is some plain and obvious thing like pleasure."

Our debate today is not new. It was already being debated in ancient Greece. Here is the full context from Nicomachean Ethics, "Verbally there is a very general agreement; for both the general run of men and people of superior refinement say that it is [eudaimonia], and identify living well and faring well with being happy; but with regard to what [eudaimonia] is they differ, and the many do not give the same account as the wise. For the former think it is some plain and obvious thing like pleasure, wealth or honour..."

Aristotle and Torquatus consider happiness and pleasure to mean the same thing. Therefore, it must not be a big issue if we sometimes use them interchangeably as this is also used interchangeably in some of the texts we use such as the Letter to Menoecus, PD, VS, and On Ends. Besides, Epicurus is not big on definitions or essences of things. Since the debate about this was already existing in ancient Greece, Epicurus would probably think of happiness and pleasure the way Aristotle and Torquatus would understand them. If not, where can we find a proof that Epicurus made any distinction much clearer than that of Torquatus?