

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

Post by "Cassius" of January 18, 2020 at 9:53 AM

I think we are together you and I Mike, but I see a great potential for confusion on this issue, and indeed I think it is the main potential confusion that Cicero used to erect his main attack on Epicurus' theory. And it's the main "attack" used today to pigeonhole Epicurus into irrelevancy. Any normal healthy young person who comes to think that "pleasure" is the exact equivalent of "absence of pain" is going to close the book on Epicurus before reading any further. And indeed that's exactly what I think Cicero and most of the modern commentators who obsess on this point intend to happen.

Even setting up an elaborate explanation based on terminology is often going to be too late for most people who don't have the desire to become professional philosophers. It's my view that this issue needs to be hit, early, hard, and unrelentingly! 😊 Given that it is the focus of much modern discussion, it's already too late for 98% of the people who come here for them to postpone the issue and undertake a longer study of Epicurus over time -- they have already been persuaded by the academic phalanx of a deep error here, and they aren't going to make any progress beyond it until it is dealt with firmly and clearly. If they don't get past this immediately they are just going to join the "old crotchety men club" looking to Epicurus for another method of anesthesia to sooth the pain of their wasted time. 😊