

Epicurean Attitudes Toward Emotion

Post by “Elli” of March 10, 2020 at 12:53 PM

The greek word "**κενός**" goes hand in hand with the word "**μάταιος**" and both have the same meaning. In english is the word "**vain**". An example, where Epicurus used these words, it is in one of his letter to Anaxarchos (see photo) :

"A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush"



And that means it is better to have something that is certain that take a risk to get more, where you might lose everything.

απ. 116 ἐν τῇ πρὸς Ἀνάξαρχον ἐπιστολῇ ταυτὶ γέγραφεν (Ἐπίκουρος): ἐγὼ δ' ἐφ' ἡδονὰς συνεχεῖς παρακαλῶ καὶ οὐκ ἐπ' ἀρετάς, κενὰς καὶ ματαίας καὶ ταραχώδεις ἐχούσας τῶν καρπῶν τὰς ἐλπίδας.

Και προς την ἐπιστολὴ του προς Ἀνάξαρχο αὐτὰ εἶχε γράψει (ο Ἐπίκουρος): ἐγὼ σε προσκαλῶ στις συνεχεῖς ἡδονές και ὄχι στις κενές, μάταιες και ταραχώδεις ἀρετές που ἔχουν τους καρπούς της ἐλπίδας.

fg 116 And to his letter to Anaxarchos (Epicurus) has written these: I summon you to the constant pleasures and not to the empty, trifling and agitated virtues that have the fruits of hope.

The hope for empty, trifling and agitated things and issues reminds me a greek idiom: "κάλλιο πέντε και στο χέρι παρά δέκα και καρτέρι". In english there is a similar idiom: "a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush".