

A Discussion on the Epicurean View of Death

Post by “profkesarsarwara” of March 12, 2020 at 5:16 AM

The entire general concept of "what happens after death" has been so overly considered across the varying belief systems. In my personal philosophy, I always considered it, simply speaking, the end. And in a manner of speaking, that is what Epicurus put forward also. He taught that at the time of death, the soul would evaporate entirely. While the existence of such a thing is indeed arguable, the idea he puts across is that of finality, teaching us to instead enrich our life in the present of things rather than dwell on what will be. This could not be a more crucial point. He claimed that death marks the end of consciousness and sensation, thereby leaving us unable to feel any emotional or physical pain/pleasure. Logically speaking, this seems the most adequate way to describe what wishful-thinkers describe to be the "afterlife". However it does not do well to dwell on this conception of time after one's death. In a writing, Epicurus presented a rather interesting sentiment, "Death does not concern us, because as long as we exist, death is not here". So why then, do we spend hours of thought thinking fearing death? Death is not to be feared, neither desired, it simply is. And then there are those who assume, that if death is an unavoidable constant, then the point of life must be to die. But this is not at all the case. Do we begin a book to finish it? Does a song begin with a beautiful chord merely for it to end? We read a book to feel the emotions it evokes, to learn and digest, to have our hopes risen, then shattered. We listen to a song to smile, and swell with the harmonies. Of course we are born with the inevitable fate of death, we are mortal after all, but that is merely the finale of the play, the closing act, if you will. We are not born to take a bow and exit stage, we are born to be joyous and learn and cry. Or alternatively put in the perspective of Catius' cat's three-legged-stool, we are born to feel pleasure and pain, to interpret the world through our senses, to anticipate. We are not born to die, we are born to live!