

PD10 - Commentary on KD 10

Post by "Cassius" of March 17, 2020 at 11:42 AM

Ok interesting comments. Now as I read your remarks you are beginning to put more emphasis on the "reproach" part (or I did not recognize that initially).

Yes definitely, we can and should have our own opinions, which means holding them and/or expressing them out loud as we find profitable to us.

But is the emphasis here on the "reproach" or just on the issue that the "proof is in the pudding"?

Maybe we here are seeing injection of the issue of "necessity" -- which in this area we are talking about is something that is being suspended, in my view, from the discussion. When you say "they are, in the end, going to experience," that is a little different from "and so would, more than likely." Probably the whole doctrine makes no sense unless we first identify that there is no natural force of determinism which will in ALL circumstances lead to the result that choosing to "party hard" for instance, will ALWAYS lead to pain thereafter. What 'party hard' means is going to differ in the eye of the beholder, and some people are indeed able to drink more (for example) than are others, without hangover or other ill effect.

I can see how our discussion may be revolving around two different issues:

(1) is it wise to make a general judgment about general categories of activity so that we can say that we "reproach" people for taking those actions which violates a general rule that we observe to be mostly true? (This presumes "reproach" means that we individually disapprove of it, not that God or virtue or anything else makes it "evil" or "always wrong.")

vs-

(2) Is there any absolute standard by which we can say that a particular course of conduct is ALWAYS worthy of reproach (again considering that "reproach" means our individual disapproval, leaving gods and "virtue" out of it)?

I would say that Epicurus would answer (1) as YES but (2) as NO, without thinking that those are contradictory. Both points are valid. The first is valid and important because generalization is a very important human behavior for prudently living pleasurably. The second second is also valid and important because we must always remind ourselves that there is no ultimate standard or rule other than an individual's own pleasure and pain under his or her circumstances. If we ever forget that, and think that some rule takes precedence over actual experience, we will lose site of the ultimate end and fall into confusion.