

# A Passage That Seems Particularly Appropriate About Now

Post by “Joshua” of June 19, 2020 at 12:55 PM

When I have more time I'd like to write a critique of Tennyson's *Lucretius*; a poetic exploration of St. Jerome's slander. Tennyson's poem bears in interesting ways on the questions you raise. What did Lucretius mean to convey by addressing Venus

*In lays that will outlast thy deity?*

Lucretius' Venus is a deeply complex figure. The personification of pleasure and sexual generation; the figurative mother of the city of Rome; the vital energy of endless and beginningless re-creation. The sometime lover and sometime rival of human strife, and the endower of human qualities.

Because the world of Epicurean philosophy is a world of human will amidst ceaseless and random Nature, we can infer that the power of Venus to calm the bloodlust of Mars is a token of the power of humans to choose Venus, and not Mars; to—and I'm quoting Tennyson again—keep *themselves*

*from the lust of blood*

*That makes a steaming slaughter-house of Rome.*