

References to Epicurus' Attitude Toward The "Place of the Sciences And Liberal Arts"

Post by "Don" of July 17, 2020 at 6:07 PM

I'm revisiting this thread for my own peace of mind...ataraxia if you will.

This idea (as I understand it) of having a "good enough" explanation of phenomena is *almost* enough to make me question my commitment to Epicurean Philosophy. I'm looking for all of you to "talk me down."

As I read the Letter to Herodotus (and other selections), I get the impression that an Epicurean only needs to have an explanation of phenomena that doesn't conflict with the senses and that doesn't cause them distress. If one's explanation of (for example) the size of the sun or why it thunders is corroborated by the senses and makes you less anxious, but doesn't equate with how we (now) know thunder happens now, that's alright.

Now, I know we know why thunder happens now and how big the sun is, but what about things like the size and age of the universe, how quantum physics works, how the brain works, and other topics of science research. I find reading and wondering about these immensely pleasurable. The contortions of my mind amuse me and make me more curious. I don't understand the how's and why's, but that doesn't make me question the material non-supernatural nature of the universe.

My question is primarily: If I'm going to call myself an Epicurean, do I have to "pick an explanation" for these phenomena and move on? **Is curiosity an Epicurean trait?** Or do I need to choose and declare (dogmatize)?

Help.