

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

Post by "Cassius" of July 18, 2020 at 6:04 PM

Here is a related thought on this topic. Don please correct me if I am wrong, but speaking for myself, at least, and I bet this applies to you too:

What gives us our confidence or persuades us or attracts us to the viewpoint that the pursuit of science MUST be the correct answer? Or that the pursuit of pleasure as the ultimate goal has to be the right answer?

Even though we are talking about science and philosophy, to me the answer is that it's FEELING, and not "logic" or "rationalism," that ultimately motivates us toward the view that to be correct, Epicurus "had" to have take the position that we intuit can be the only "best" position on these issues.

There's NO WAY that Epicurus would ultimately have been satisfied with a life of bread and water if it were "reasonably" available to him (unless he was compelled to accept it) and NO WAY that Epicurus would turn away from the pursuit of more scientific knowledge if it were "reasonably" available to him either. But the meaning of "reasonably" in this context is not some question of abstract logic, but a question of "reasonable cost" in terms of pain and pleasure. We're not choosing science just for the sake of the abstraction, but because it leads to the most pleasurable life, just like with virtue. All Epicurus was doing was describing science just like he described virtue and everything else, within the global framework of judging it in terms of its instrumentality in the pleasure/pain question.