

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

Post by "Don" of July 26, 2020 at 8:55 AM

Oh, dear. I did say I was going to respond. I'm going back and listening again to make sure I remember correctly. I'm about 1/2 way through again. Here are some initial thoughts:

I think I'm coming around to the idea that investigation... observation, if you will... of phenomena doesn't have to stop if you're Epicurean. I'm still not sure if I'm onboard with Epicurus and the classical Epicureans being advocates of "science" since science as a method or discipline didn't exist yet. I'm uneasy about imposing anachronistic definitions onto ancient terms, texts, and ideas. That said, Epicurus's φυσιολογίας "physiologias" or the study of Nature/what is natural would imply he wanted an accurate or realistic understanding of natural processes and phenomena. My jury is still out on the implications of this.

I do want to address the conversation in the podcast on truth or Truth with a capital T. I have to disagree with [Elayne](#) and others that everyone knows what Truth is. In a quotidian sense, people can understand what true vs false is. "2+2=4" is true. I can count things. "The Earth is flat" is not true but some people will assert that it is true. For them, that statement is true and in some ways Truth. Other people "know" God is real and intercedes in their life and that's True. They would say others who don't believe God is Truth are mistaken (at least). All of humanity does not have a prolepsis of Truth. That would make life easier. Maybe in the most rudimentary sense of true vs false, but I don't think that rises to the level of prolepsis. People know what THEY know is Truth but those other people over there don't know Truth. Unless I've misconstrued the conversation, I think the concept of Truth is much more elusive than some on the panel tried to make it out to be.

PS It appeared to me that Truth was being described as more of a Platonic ideal than as an Epicurean prolepsis in the podcast.