

To What Extent, If Any, Does Modern Physics Invalidate Epicurean Philosophy?

Post by "Cassius" of August 15, 2020 at 9:59 PM

Cassius:

"If the elementary particles are quanta, for example, would pleasure cease being the foundation of human morality? I think not." That is a great example of an update in physics that does not change the conclusions an iota. On the other hand, if the elementary particles are found to be inscribed "**Best wishes, Jehova**" then that would be a scientific discovery that WOULD change the conclusions rather dramatically. As humans we will never see these elementary particles ourselves, so we need a framework for having confidence in our conclusions in the absence of seeing them with our own naked eyes. Are we to say to ourselves, "Yes it's POSSIBLE that they are so inscribed, because I haven't seen them"? I feel confident that even given our advances to date, Epicurus would still say "no." One might want to qualify that with "reasonably possible" or other hedge words, but at some point you're simply playing a word game rather than dealing in useful concepts, because once you truly believe that "anything is possible" then you're a long way toward totally losing touch with human reality.