

Comment at the Epicurean Philosophy Facebook Group On Pleasure As The Highest Good

Post by "Cassius" of September 18, 2020 at 11:12 AM

"We have to use language, and Epicurus is advocating using the most simple, direct language to accomplish this to cut down the possibility of misunderstanding."

That is certainly true, and so therefore Epicurus must have agreed with it.

But that does not mean that words, no matter how precisely defined, can ever be the equivalent of the thing itself, or reveal it in all its dimensions. That limitation also seems true from a non-supernatural atomist perspective, but the rationalism of Plato and others seems to elevate words into something more - like the Logos of Christianity. (In the beginning was the word.....)

As per the implication of the Wikipedia excerpt, it would appear that Epicurus held that such a view of the nature of words and concepts is incorrect and that words are purely matters of convention.

I think there is a close parallel here between words and math and geometry, both of which too Epicurus would have used while also remembering their limitations.