

Reverence and Awe In Epicurean Philosophy

Post by "Cassius" of October 26, 2020 at 8:52 AM

I know one thing that is going through my mind, is that we're really at the very tip of the beginning of discussing these issues. Most of the commentators simply don't take the issues seriously and they dismiss them immediately after raising, if they even raise them at all. We've got to be patient and methodical in retracing all the steps.

As for Don's reference to seeing images as light, yes I think that is a normal reaction. However in the case of smells, at least, I think it's probably pretty clear that the Epicureans held there to be atoms drifting from the object to our nose, and in that case I presume we still think they were correct.

In the case of hearing and sight, however, I am not so sure even what the current science is. I presume that we think sound is the transmissions of vibrations in the intervening atoms between us and the drum, so there's not really any atom from the drum hitting us.

Likewise, with light, is there any atom from the drum impacting our eyes? I'm really not sure what light is and that our current definitions exclude the view that there are particles of some kind (better word than atoms) from the object that come to our eyes.

And I am not really sure whether the issue of whether there are actually particles traveling through space is a bright line difference that would lead to different conclusions.

But as a basic observation, I am recalling that the texts seem to imply or actually state that images arise because particles travel from the surface of the drum to our eyes. Again there's a lot to explore there as I am not sure that there ends up being a big difference whether we think of the thing traveling as "particles" or "waves" or whatever.

Then there's the whole issue of "action at a distance" which probably gets wrapped up into this, and it is my understanding that there's no solid interpretation of that.

If I recall too there's an explicit discussion of magnetism and how that would work which would be relevant to this too.