

Scientism, Atheism, And The Admissibility Of Spiritual Experience

Post by "Susan Hill" of November 2, 2020 at 3:27 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

It seems to me that the field of what most people seem to be talking about when they discuss religious experiences is very clearly over the line in what would be "false suppositions," according to the test of what I think are many Epicurean texts that the nature of a true god is entirely blissful and undependent on others, which excludes them from liking or disliking any particular humans. It would be on that basis that I would exclude the great majority of what most people in my experience have called "religious experiences" - because those in my experience have always been shorthand ways of saying that these people have direct communications and special revelations resulting from them.

But I don't yet want to lump you in with that, Susan, because I simply don't know specifically what you are talking about as "spiritual experiences." I think it is perfectly possible that experiences of awe such as I think Don and Joshua have referenced could be experienced in many different ways, with many different levels of intensity, prompted by many different phenomena. But I don't expect that Don or Joshua are implying "communication" in a sense that would amount to a special revelation about

Regarding Scientism, this article does a much better job of providing specific examples:

<https://blog.apaonline.org/2018/01/25/the...with-scientism/>

I completely agree that there is a lot more that goes along with most people's experiences of divinity, but I am only sticking to the two things common to all: blessedness and immortality. Epicurus says that is all we get that is reliable, and indeed, if you compare the evangelical Christian who thinks she is talking to Jesus, to the Vedantic monk feeling that he has achieved awareness of oneness with Brahman, than maybe this is the only similarity. It seems to me that both would say they were aware of something that was itself aware, rather than inert like a rock. I'm pretty sure Epicurus intended blessed and immortal gods to have some form of intelligence, however different it may be from our own, but I'm not suggesting we know anything more than that and as we all keep pointing out, we quickly get into difficulties if we start imagining that they want anything from us.

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/1752-scientism-atheism-and-the-admissibility-of-spiritual-experience/?postID=9720#post9720>

I take “communication” off the table too, and so did not mention it in the essay. I mused at one point that if there was information (images) travelling both to the gods from us, and from the gods to us, that wasn't that a sort of communication by definition? But maybe not.

Thanks for your input!