

# What? A Two Thousand Year Warning From Epicurus Isn't Long Enough For You To Be Prepared?

Post by "Cassius" of September 29, 2019 at 8:16 PM

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### Epicurus' Letter to Herodotus

And in addition to what we have already said we must believe that worlds, and indeed every limited compound body which continuously exhibits a similar appearance to the things we see, were created from the infinite, and that all such things, greater and less alike, were separated off from individual agglomerations of matter; and that all are again dissolved, some more quickly, some more slowly, some suffering from one set of causes, others from another. And further we must believe that these worlds were neither (created) all of necessity with one configuration (nor yet with every kind of shape. Furthermore, we must believe that in all worlds there are living creatures and plants and other things we see in this world;) for indeed no one could prove that in a world of one kind there might or might not have been included the kinds of seeds from which living things and plants and all the rest of the things we see are composed, and that in a world of another kind they could not have been.

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Post by "Joshua" of September 30, 2019 at 8:37 AM

My experience talking with people close to me tells me that they ARE prepared. They are prepared to believe the inviolate truth of their Authorized King James Version even if it means denying the evidence of their own lyin' eyes. This they already do, denying even the age and

shape of the world; the foundation is laid well, and will not be uprooted by any passage of years. Only, perhaps, by passage of generations.

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### Post by “Cassius” of September 30, 2019 at 10:02 AM

Exactly and I totally agree! That's my experience too. They will reconcile ANYTHING contradictory in order to maintain their prior worldview.

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### Post by “Eikadistes” of September 30, 2019 at 2:14 PM

Until an intelligent, humanoid extraterrestrial breaks bread with a fundamentalist, their crowd will deny the tools that we will use to verify any extraterrestrial existence – they will do so in the same way that the Inquisition **refused** to look through Galileo's telescope, and justified it by suggesting that the new tool was fallacious, and contained witchcraft.

*Even then, **even if** they were abducted, or had a full conversation with an extraterrestrial in their own language, they would still only choose to understand them within the context of religious mythology. They might say that the creature is one of God's **righteous** angels, or they may identify them as **fallen** angels (*I think the latter, most likely*).*

The tendency of a fundamentalist is to reject the vocabulary of the contemporary era to digest new discoveries. They will always reduce their understanding to one that must, necessarily be compatible with an inerrant, religious framework.

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### Post by “Cassius” of September 30, 2019 at 2:30 PM

Some number of them are exactly like that -- we'll never make any progress with them. But most of us here were probably raised with some variation of that point of view, and yet here we are! 😊

I guess the practical test is how do we separate those with whom discussion is possible from those who are just so closed-minded that it makes no sense even to engage them.

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## Post by “Eikadistes” of September 30, 2019 at 3:03 PM

I'd say it's about the **willingness** they show to *learn* new things, and the **enthusiasm** they demonstrate through a conversation. If they've already decided **what** Epicurean philosophy *is*, and **who** we *are*, and they are unwilling to learn about the principle doctrines, then we'll have better luck communicating with our beloved pets.

If they are unwilling, I think an appropriate response is to share Principle Doctrine 39, which demonstrates that Epicureans have no desire to instigate a fight for the sake of *winning a fight*. Unlike many religious traditions, our understanding is independent of the faiths of idealists. **Nature** is the greatest teacher, and **God** is an *absent* teacher.

Another helpful point for detractors and antagonists to learn is that Epicurean physics functionally explains the world for all perspectives. You don't have to *believe* in Epicurean philosophy for physics to be universally applicable. *Rejecting gravity* doesn't nullify it; but **God** doesn't work unless you join his fan club. **Atomism** works, no matter who you are.

The same can be said of our ethics. God doesn't tell you to go to the bathroom, *your bowels do*. God doesn't tell you to eat, *your stomach does*. The Bible doesn't tell you when to sleep, *your body does*. No idealists out there claim to rely on Divine Reminders to satisfy their natural needs and cravings. *Unilateral faith* does not change one's needs.

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## Post by “Cassius” of September 30, 2019 at 3:04 PM

Great points Nate!

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## Post by “Todd” of September 30, 2019 at 6:07 PM

I agree with what Nate said about willingness to learn, and not instigating fights, and I'd like to add to that.

It's a rare person who will be argued into changing their beliefs. The best you can probably hope for is to plant a seed that may or may not bear fruit in the future.

Our approach needs to be more like an invitation to dinner than a challenge to battle. The ones who are willing to learn will come to us if they know we're here.

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**Post by “Cassius” of September 30, 2019 at 9:33 PM**

Good to hear from you Todd - hope you'll post more often!