

Happy Twentieth of February, 2020!

Post by "Cassius" of February 20, 2020 at 1:00 AM

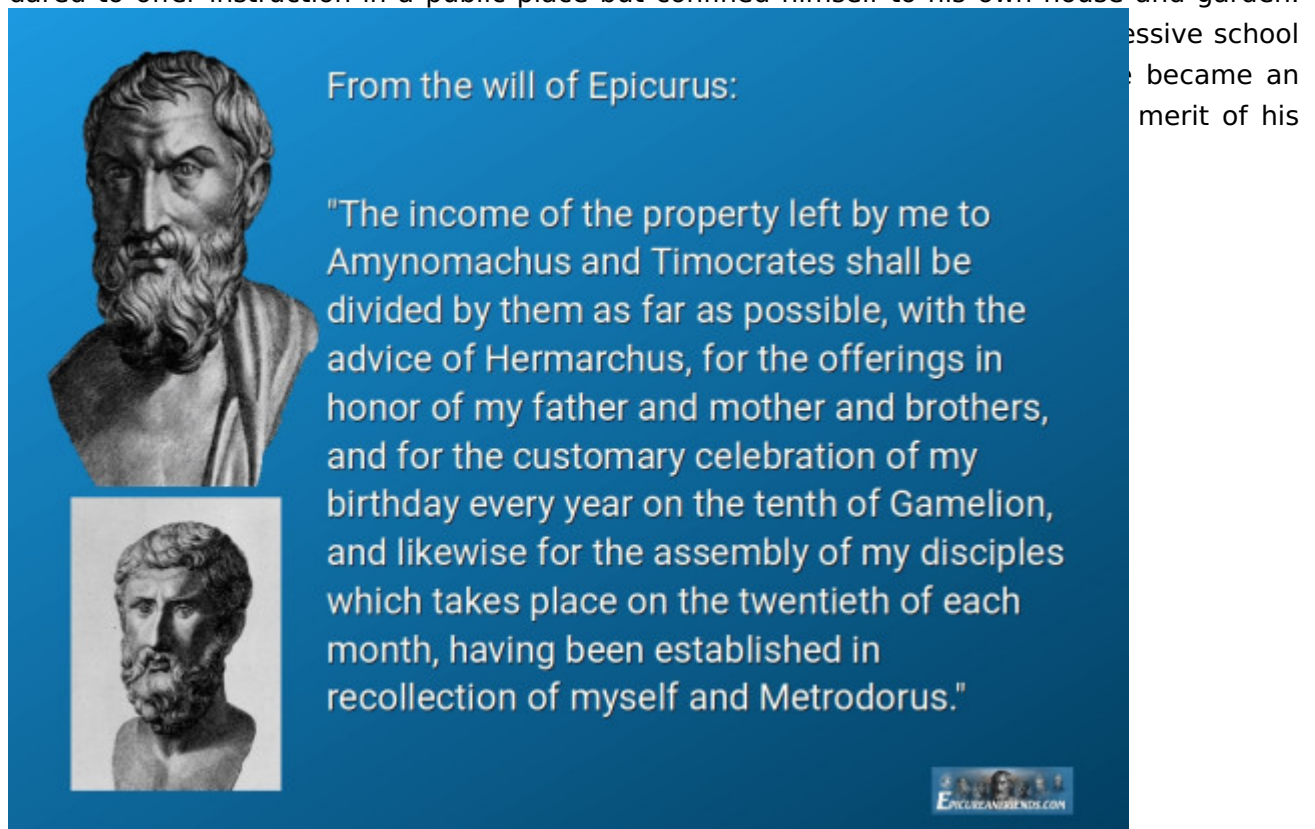
Happy 20th of February, 2020!

Even if you haven't read DeWitt's "Epicurus and His Philosophy," you can still profit from these first three opening paragraphs, because if you don't understand this point you'll never be able to navigate between conflicting interpretations of what Epicurus taught:

"At the very outset the reader should be prepared to think of him at one and the same time as the most revered and the most reviled of all founders of thought in the Graeco-Roman world.

His was the only creed that attained to the dimensions of a world philosophy. For the space of more than seven centuries, three before Christ and four afterward, it continued to command the devotion of multitudes of men. It nourished among Greeks and barbarians alike, in Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, Judaea, Egypt, Italy, Roman Africa, and Gaul. The man himself was revered as an ethical father, a savior, and a god. Men wore his image on finger-rings; they displayed painted portraits of him in their living rooms; the more affluent honored him with likenesses in marble. His handbooks of doctrine were carried about like breviaries; his sayings were esteemed as if oracles and committed to memory as if Articles of Faith. His published letters were cherished as if epistles of an apostle. Pledges were taken to live obedient to his precepts. On the twentieth day of every month his followers assembled to perform solemn rites in honor of his memory, a sort of sacrament.

Throughout these same seven centuries no man was more ceaselessly reviled. At his first appearance as a public teacher he was threatened with the fate of Socrates. In Athens he never dared to offer instruction in a public place but confined himself to his own house and garden.



From the will of Epicurus:

"The income of the property left by me to Amynomachus and Timocrates shall be divided by them as far as possible, with the advice of Hermarchus, for the offerings in honor of my father and mother and brothers, and for the customary celebration of my birthday every year on the tenth of Gamelion, and likewise for the assembly of my disciples which takes place on the twentieth of each month, having been established in recollection of myself and Metrodorus."

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