

PD10 - Commentary on KD 10

Post by "Don" of March 12, 2020 at 8:51 PM

εἰ τὰ ποιητικὰ τῶν περὶ τοὺς ἀσώτους ἡδονῶν ἔλυε τοὺς φόβους τῆς διανοίας τοὺς τε περὶ μετεώρων καὶ θανάτου καὶ ἀλγηδόνων, ἔτι τε τὸ πέρασ τῶν ἐπιθυμιῶν <καὶ τῶν ἀλγηδόνων> ἐδίδασκεν, οὐκ ἂν ποτε εἴχομεν ὅ τι μεμψαίμεθα αὐτοῖς πανταχόθεν ἐκπληρουμένοις τῶν ἡδονῶν καὶ οὐδαμόθεν οὔτε τὸ ἀλγοῦν οὔτε τὸ λυπούμενον ἔχουσιν, ὅπερ ἐστὶ τὸ κακόν.

A big "if." If this is the case, we have no argument against the profligate. But...

The word translated as just "profligate" here is **ἀσώτους** which literally means "those having no hope of safety, the abandoned, the profligate, Latin. **perditus**." And the Latin word then conveys "the destroyed, the ruined; the wasted, the squandered; the lost."

From these connotations, we can easily see that Epicurus does not hold out the prospect here that the **ἀσώτοι** have a chance of resolving all their fears of death, suffering, etc., through their wanton "pleasures" **ἡδονῶν**. That is why Epicurus does indeed have complaints against them. They have no hope of safety - they literally need to be saved as if they're still at sea and drowning - and Epicurus is out to save them from themselves.

Post by "Cassius" of March 13, 2020 at 3:27 AM

Yes agreed - but - it may well be too the case that this is one of Epicurus' most clear statements against "virtue" but citing the opposite - by your translations we see that he is citing the "worst" possible type of person, and saying that these characterizations alone are insufficient to label their way of life as undesirable -- and that is in their results that we should judge them, just as we should judge harshly those who claim to follow "virtue" but who end up creating boatloads of pain.

Post by "Don" of March 16, 2020 at 10:49 PM

I've been giving your response some thought and have have done some additional investigation. **τὰ ποιητικὰ**, upon further study as well as consultation of the [Epicurus Wiki](#), means "those things which produce" or "those things which are capable of making". **τὰ ποιητικὰ** are the subjects of the sentence.

Therefore **εἰ τὰ ποιητικὰ τῶν περὶ τοὺς ἀσώτους ἡδονῶν** would mean something like "IF those things which produce the pleasures of the profligate..." So we're talking explicitly about those things which produce the feelings of pleasure for the profligate.

So, IF these things...did what?

...ἔλυε τοὺς φόβους τῆς διανοίας τοὺς τε περὶ μετεώρων καὶ θανάτου καὶ ἀλγηδόνων

...

"... set free the fears of thinking about meteorological phenomena, death, and pains..."

The remainder of the doctrine then tells us that IF these things which produce the pleasures of the profligate dispelled these fears and taught them the limits of pleasure, we would have no reason to reproach them (i.e., the profligate).

The Epicurus Wiki gives a good full translation:

"If the things which debauched men find pleasurable put an end to all fears (such as concerns about the heavenly bodies, death, and pain) and if they revealed how we ought to limit our desires, we would have no reason to reproach them, for they would be fulfilled with pleasures from every source while experiencing no pain, neither in mind nor body, which is the chief evil of life."

Yonge (1895) gives the following: "If those things which make the pleasures of debauched men, put an end to the fears of the mind, and to those which arise about the heavenly bodies, and death, and pain; and if they taught us what ought to be the limit of our desires, we should have no pretence for blaming those who wholly devote themselves to pleasure, and who never feel any pain or grief (which is the chief evil) from any quarter."

All of this, from my perspective, then clearly shows that Epicurus did not believe the pleasures these profligate individuals were experiencing were indeed dispelling the fears of death, etc., nor were they teaching them the limits of pleasure, and that this DID open the profligate up to reproach and blame.

This appears to be a direct refutation of the sensual, hedonistic Cyrenaics and to rebuff the argument that some leveled against the Epicureans as debauched hedonists. Epicurus could point to his tenth Principal Doctrine and say, "If the pleasures of the profligate really dispelled the fears I say are important and taught them them the limits of pleasure as I teach, you could lump me and my friends in with them. But I find the profligate worthy of reproach because they are not having their fears dispelled not are they learning the limits of pleasure."

Post by "Cassius" of March 17, 2020 at 5:27 AM

Hmmm. i am not sure I am with you Eugenios.

I would be concerned that when you add in phrases like "I say are important" and "I teach" then you are suggesting that Epicurus was willing to substitute his own personal experience feeling for those of the person being discussed, and I cannot see that he would have allowed such an interpretation.

Now because Epicurus WAS practical, he observed that "most people" do in fact have their painful emotions grouped in certain categories, such as fear of the afterlife and fear of punishing gods in this life, so statistically speaking those are the ones to be on guard against.

But to suggest that one person can say with certainty that another "should feel" in a certain way seems to me to be disallowed by the "atomist" system.

I see this as basically "Depraved people do not achieve pure pleasure because their version of depravity generates practically, in their experience, pain that outweighs the pleasure they gain from their depravity."

I think it's worth considering too that the word "outweighs" or the phrase "more pain than pleasure" is necessarily broad (even ambiguous) because I don't think Epicurus would say it is possible to quantify "objectively" how a person is going to rank pleasure or pain in terms of type, or intensity, or duration. While we can generalize pretty easily, it seems to me also pretty clear that we can reduce this down to mathematical comparisons.

If we could (or "had a right to") take precise positions on how to rank particular pleasures and pain, then all this could be reduced to idealistic formulas, but as I see Epicurus' philosophy, that is impossible. And it's that impossibility that leads to observations such as [PD10](#) -- there is NO WAY to make a judgment "beforehand" about any person's choice of pleasure and pain because pleasure and pain are individual subjective experiences.

What do you think of that?

Post by "Cassius" of March 17, 2020 at 5:32 AM

I think the post by [Elli](#) here is also on point with this discussion in terms of all decisions being ultimately evaluated by their ultimate result, which ULTIMATELY is reducible to one of the two

categories of "pleasure" or "pain": [Consequentialism & Moral Relativism within the context of Pleasure-filled Philosophy](#)

So what we're talking about in both cases comes down to "Is there an 'OBJECTIVE' ranking of Pleasures and Pains to which we can refer to as absolute standards to be embraced and rejected in all situations?"

And the answer to that which is dictated by Epicurean understanding of the nature of the universe would presumably be "No such standard exists so no absolute ranking is possible."

Post by "Don" of March 17, 2020 at 10:27 AM

I *think* I see where you're going with this, [Cassius](#) . Let me provide a little more of my understanding, trying to incorporate what I think you are saying.

τὰ ποιητικὰ τῶν περὶ τοὺς ἀσώτους ἡδονῶν means "Those things which produce the pleasures of the profligate (ἀσώτοι)." That's what the text says. Period.

So, what produces "the pleasures of the profligate"? I imagine this would refer to what is typically associated with decadent behavior: too much alcohol, too many drugs, too much dangerous sex, too much rich food, etc. All these things *would* result in pleasure. And, as Epicurus said, no pleasure is in itself an evil but some pleasures should be chosen while others should be rejected for future pleasures. I understand this Doctrine to speak directly to that precept.

The problem for the profligate is that they don't respect the natural limits of pleasure and so would, more than likely, see "those things which produce" their pleasures result in pains greater than the pleasure experienced. They are pleasures which have been excessively overindulged in by the profligate, which is what opens them up to reproach and blame. They have not utilized their choices and rejections wisely. They have not practiced prudence, which is one of the features of leading a pleasurable life, and so, even though they experience pleasure, they are, in the end, going to experience more pain because they don't respect the limits of pleasure or will not have their existential fears assuaged.

Epicurus isn't putting forth a standard of pleasure here. Pleasure is pleasure. Period. What I believe he's saying here is:

If an overabundance of alcohol, overindulgence in dangerous sex, overeating rich food, allayed the profligate's fears and taught them the limits of pleasure, we'd have no reason to reproach them. (But, if they keep ignoring the limits of pleasure and are not practicing prudence to attain the greatest good, which is maximizing pleasure in one's life, we can reproach them for their unwise behavior.)

That's my take on this Doctrine.

Post by “Cassius” of March 17, 2020 at 11:42 AM

Ok interesting comments. Now as I read your remarks you are beginning to put more emphasis on the "reproach" part (or I did not recognize that initially).

Yes definitely, we can and should have our own opinions, which means holding them and/or expressing them out loud as we find profitable to us.

But is the emphasis here on the "reproach" or just on the issue that the "proof is in the pudding"?

Maybe we here are seeing injection of the issue of "necessity" -- which in this area we are talking about is something that is being suspended, in my view, from the discussion. When you say "they are, in the end, going to experience," that is a little different from "and so would, more than likely." Probably the whole doctrine makes no sense unless we first identify that there is no natural force of determinism which will in ALL circumstances lead to the result that choosing to "party hard" for instance, will ALWAYS lead to pain thereafter. What 'party hard' means is going to differ in the eye of the beholder, and some people are indeed able to drink more (for example) than are others, without hangover or other ill effect.

I can see how our discussion may be revolving around two different issues:

(1) is it wise to make a general judgment about general categories of activity so that we can say that we "reproach" people for taking those actions which violates a general rule that we observe to be mostly true? (This presumes "reproach" means that we individually disapprove of it, not that God or virtue or anything else makes it "evil" or "always wrong.")

vs-

(2) Is there any absolute standard by which we can say that a particular course of conduct is ALWAYS worthy of reproach (again considering that "reproach" means our individual disapproval, leaving gods and "virtue" out of it)?

I would say that Epicurus would answer (1) as YES but (2) as NO, without thinking that those are contradictory. Both points are valid. The first is valid and important because generalization is a very important human behavior for prudently living pleasurably. The second second is also valid and important because we must always remind ourselves that there is no ultimate standard or rule other than an individual's own pleasure and pain under his or her circumstances. If we ever forget that, and think that some rule takes precedence over actual experience, we will lose site of the ultimate end and fall into confusion.

Post by “Don” of March 17, 2020 at 12:39 PM



I **think** we may have come to a mutual agreement!

I believe we're both agreeing with the "proof is in the pudding" and I would concur with your assertion that Epicurus would agree with #1 (general rules, general categories, "not that God or virtue or anything else makes it "evil" or "always wrong."") but reject #2 ("absolute standard by which we can say that a particular course of conduct is ALWAYS worthy of reproach").

I also find the "general category" idea in keeping with Epicurean reasoning by inference as I understand it and comparing similar cases : If this is usually the case, and this case looks like that case, this is going to be the likely result. Likewise, in this Doctrine, if "party hard" behavior usually leads to pain, chances are that if you engage in that, you're going to experience more pain than pleasure. For that reason, we're going to "strongly advise" (read: reproach) you to not go down that path. As Epicureans, we'd like to offer an alternative perspective for you to consider. But, hey, it's up to you.

Post by “Cassius” of March 17, 2020 at 1:07 PM

Yes but let me also say this: What is the unique benefit of Epicurean philosophy? What is the message that has been relentlessly suppressed and demeaned for 2000 years?

Have the anti-Epicureans been arguing that it is difficult to predict that relentless drinking and debauchery will ultimately lead to pain that outweighs the pleasure that was involved initially? Have the anti-Epicureans been saying that Epicurus was too tough and too judgmental on people who didn't have the judgment to stop drinking before it was too late?

Or have the anti-Epicureans been arguing against his message that there is no absolute rule-making authority, and that their gods and their virtue are meaningless or worse?

Which message more distinguishes Epicurus, and therefore is so important to understand that it makes the "top ten" list of important things for Epicurean students to remember?



Post by “Cassius” of March 17, 2020 at 5:11 PM

I had to drive this afternoon and had some more time to think about this. I do think that one factor that needs to be considered in the way that people can view Epicurus (or anything!) differently is to further acknowledge that different perspectives lead to different areas of emphasis. Although the end result (pleasure) is the same, people are definitely going to view different parts of the philosophy from different perspectives and with different areas of emphasis. A strong 21 year old is going to focus on aspects and advice differently from a weak 80 year old -- men different from women, farmers different from lawyers, etc etc etc. Acknowledgement and validation is not a fault of the philosophy, it is a feature, because it explains WHY these differences in perspective can all be "correct" from the point of view of the person involved.

Post by “Don” of March 17, 2020 at 8:12 PM

I have been taking great pleasure in this back and forth, [Cassius](#) . Thank you for a stimulating conversation. Would that we could be enjoying it in the shade of the Garden, a slight breeze blowing through the trees, with some bread, cheese, and a bottle of wine or spring water, whichever pleases you.

I hear what you mean (I think) about different emphases. It's not so much disagreement as [seeing different parts of the elephant](#) (to use the old proverb). We just need to acknowledge we're both looking at the same elephant.

Post by “Don” of March 17, 2020 at 9:12 PM

An interesting take, but...

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Have the anti-Epicureans been arguing that it is difficult to predict that relentless drinking and debauchery will ultimately lead to pain that outweighs the pleasure that was involved initially? Have the anti-Epicureans been saying that Epicurus was too tough and too judgmental on people who didn't have the judgment to stop drinking before it was too late?

Or have the anti-Epicureans been arguing against his message that there is no absolute rule-making authority, and that their gods and their virtue are meaningless or worse?

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...I would say let the anti-Epicureans take a one-way trip with Charon across the Styx (figuratively, speaking, of course 😊). From my perspective, The [Principal Doctrines](#) weren't made for them or to refute their ignorant philosophies. The epitomes were written for Epicureans by Epicureans to have a ready summary to review and memorize. Just as VS 26 says: *Understand that short discourses and long discourses both achieve the same thing.* We are lucky to even have what we have to even discuss different interpretations, but the teachings are all encapsulated in both long and short discourses (even the 4-line Tetracharmakos). So, technically, PD 10 made the Top 40. 😊

My take is that, for an Epicurean, this Doctrine reminds us to ignore society and culture telling us that more is better, greed is good, and that true pleasure has limits and we would do well to remember that, otherwise we could end up with more pain than pleasure in our life. Society and culture can speak with bullhorns. Ignore them! I'm not saying that's the only import of PD 10, but I believe it's an important one.

I find it interesting that PD 10 is sandwiched between PD 9 and 11. This is surely another discussion 😊 but PD 9 seems to reinforce "Pleasure is pleasure, period" (what we've been saying in 10) and 11 talks about the same fears in 10 that aren't allayed by the overindulgence of the profligate. I think there *may* be some significance in the context and order of those 3, and I'm sure I'm not the first to say it. Just cogitating out loud.

Post by “Cassius” of March 17, 2020 at 10:28 PM

Ha - you probably won't be surprised to hear me say that I do read that differently. This may again arise from my DeWitt perspective, given that he drummed into me that so much of Epicurean doctrine is a direct refutation of Platonic doctrines, even / especially so many of the 12 fundamentals of physics, but also the [Principal Doctrines](#).

So I agree with this "The epitomes were written for Epicureans by Epicureans.." but I would say that in so doing "The [Principal Doctrines](#) were... made to refute their [the non-Epicureans'] ignorant philosophies."

I think that is most clear in the arrangement of the primary doctrines:

1 - A direct attack on supernatural religion, providing that antidote by which it is defeated.

2 - A direct attack on fear of death (again a segment of religion), providing the antidote by which it is defeated/

3&4 - A direct attack on Plato's assertion in [Philebus](#) that pleasure cannot be the guide of life, showing the key to rejecting the argument that Plato had made in [Philebus](#) that pleasure cannot be satisfied.

5 - A direct attack on "virtue" as the goal by providing the antidote to show that virtue means nothing unless it is linked to pleasure as the goal.

and then many of the rest, including ten, simply being more specific applications of attacks on the doctrines of non-Epicurean schools.

Because see, I do not think that Epicurus could afford to focus on "otherwise we could end up with more pain than pleasure in our life." In teaching new generations of students to reject the prior consensus, Epicurus could not count on their agreement that "more pleasure than pain" was a legitimate goal. Many (most?) held that the goal was wisdom, or virtue, or serving god, and Epicurus could not simply state a goal of "more pleasure than pain" without justifying that pleasure was in fact the goal.

Maybe I have too romantic an attachment to the Epicurean school, but I cannot believe that Epicurus could choose for himself, or appeal to others to pursue, pleasure as the goal, unless he was FIRST absolutely convinced that pleasure WAS the best and highest goal of the good life. He could NEVER leap to the practical discussion of pursuing pleasure unless he had first dismissed and demolished the contenders for the crown of "best life" -- because if he had not done so - if he had accepted any argument from the other schools of their superiority - then due to his respect for himself, for his students, and for nature, he would have himself led the way in arguing that other goal.

So I do not see Epicurus' work as a "reminder" of anything, but a battering-ram (or a CANNON, in Amrinder Singh's analogy 😊) aimed directly at the competing schools, or to use another analogy, a vaccine intended to heal the errors and then inoculate those previously muddled minds that came to Epicurus from other schools.

As to your last comment about the order of the doctrines, I have seen it observed (but can't remember where) that there is no reason to believe that the original format was divided into 40 doctrines, so that in original form the Doctrines read more as a narrative than as a list, such

that the topical divisions are not nearly so sharp as the modern numbering might indicate. I think that is backed up by their being no evidence in Cicero or other ancient writer's referring to them as being of particular number.

(If you can bear with me til you have time to read more into DeWitt, I don't think you will then have any problem understanding why I make some of the arguments that I do. You may not agree, but you'll see that most of my arguments are not original to me!)

Post by “Don” of March 18, 2020 at 6:03 AM

LOL I suspected you might have a different take, and I looked forward to reading your response 😊

As previously, I don't think we're as far apart as some others reading this may think, I think. I certainly respect your passion, and I am looking forward to delving more into DeWitt.

I agree that Epicurus and his intellectual descendants were no wilting violets when it came to defending the school he founded. We just have to read the titles of their works in Diogenes L to see all the "Against" this school or "against" that Philosopher. I imagine Epicurus saying, anachronistically of course, "Come at me, bro! You don't stand a chance." Philodemus and Lucretius were doing the same with their works. Cannons/Canons were blazing until the Christian Juggernaut swept ALL before it. I highly recommend the fairly recent book **The Darkening Age: The Christian Destruction of the Classical World** by Catherine Nixey if you really want to weep for what might have been.

I find your point about the possible original narrative structure of the Kuriai Doxai interesting. That makes sense, especially when we have the Letters as examples of narrative epitomes. I have also seen Cyril Bailey's proposed division of the 40. He proposed that the KD can be grouped thus:

- CBi. 1-4: The tetrapharmakos, the four-fold fundamental principles necessary for a tranquil life
- CBii. 5: The relation of pleasure to virtue
- CBiii. 6, 7: Protection from external disturbances
- CBiv. 8-10: The selection of pleasures
- CBv. 11-13: The ethical value of physical science
- CBvi. 14-21: The wise man's life in relation to nature, his fellow men, and to true pleasure (can be sub-divided)
- CBvii. 22-26: The tests and standards of moral (i.e., truly pleasant) action
- CBviii. 27, 28: Friendship

- CBix. 29, 30: The classification of desires
- CBx. 31-38: Justice and injustice
- CBxi. 39, 40: The wise man's life in the Epicurean community

I'm not saying any of that is earth-shattering but I've found it interesting as an organizing principle which would lend itself whether in list or paragraph form.

I will say that when you wrote:

Epicurus could not simply state a goal of "more pleasure than pain" without justifying that pleasure was in fact the goal.

I have to say, in a small way, I disagree with you in emphasis. I think Epicurus DID justify pleasure as the goal in how he laid out the entire Canon, Physics, and Ethics. Lucretius does the same. It wasn't that Epicurus just "stated the goal" that pleasure was the goal. He built, from the ground up, a mighty fortress to defend that assertion with the flag of pleasure flying from the turrets! He continued to let fly arrows at his opponents through his writings until the Christian nuke ALMOST wiped him out. But eventually, "he" (as in his and his followers' works) could emerge from the underground bunker and begin some guerilla warfare.

And you thought YOU had a "too romantic an attachment to the Epicurean school,," 😊

Post by "Cassius" of March 18, 2020 at 6:56 AM

Eugenios where is that Bailey list found? That is an example for why I very much distrust Bailey's interpretations (though not necessarily his translations).

In my view there is no way that Epicurus would ever talk about or endorse wording about "true pleasure."

That just jumps out at me as unEpicurean analysis on his part. Call it Stoicism or Platonism or most any other perspective, but talking about "true pleasure" is a huge red flag. By what standard would anyone know "true pleasure" from "false pleasure"? That is a variation of the trap in [Philebus](#), because surely if there is a standard as to what pleasures are "true" and what are "false" then knowledge of that standard is more important than pleasure itself.

Post by "Elli" of March 18, 2020 at 8:09 AM

Please let me add in your discussion/comments, a clarification with a simplification: We have NOT to forget what is the dopamine and what are the serotonin, the endorphins, the oxytocine etc. Our epicurean pure pleasure is connected mainly with the latter.

The pleasures of the profligates usually are based on dopamine that produce addiction, having the results/consequences to produce pain and in the individual and in a society to the fact of breaking its coherence leading it to the decadence. It is not by chance that Dr. Freud said that religions are the narcotic opium of the herds.

At this point, please my friends, let me narrate a story of real experience to understand where is the whole point that Epicurus and Lucretius are pointing out. It is the false religions, false philosophies, false educational system that always are united with Politics.

My experience is based on real facts, when I heard a narration of a man of his life story. It was a man that I met him with other friends in the home of one of my friends. That man is originated from Libya. In the era of 70s-80s, as he said, it was a law in his country, that permitted him of taking monthly a very good amount of allowance from the government that was run by the leadership of Muammar Gaddafi (for whom, we epicureans have the very well stated PD 7). But anyway, this allowance that this man took, it was for the purpose to study medicine at any University in Greece. Usually, to finish university studies on medicine it takes 5 years for acquiring the diploma, and then it takes almost 5 years to work inside hospitals to acquire the specialty.

Meanwhile, when he was narrating his story, he also praising his country's government's policy on how beneficial was and for him and for his society to become a doctor of medicine for helping his people. Yes, but... **he took to him to take his diploma, from the University, for almost ten years**, because as he said, **he liked playing cards, drinking alcohol drinks that alcohol was something forbidden by his country religious rules**. And while he was narrating his hobbies, he was also praised how nice and free were the years that he was a student.

Thus, one day and after he was almost to finish the specialty to become an ophthalmologist, as he said, everything went upside down in his life when he met a beautiful (but for me non-wise) Greek lady that was a religious christian. So, on the basis of **"love and marriage"** those two, as a couple, they had had to unite their gods to become as one since, as he also said, both these gods are one and the same, because both have the same patriarch that is called Abraham... **and here we say : GOOD GRIEF !**

So, the only prerequisite that was set by the parents of that greek lady for that man (who was islamist) and marrying her was to be baptized as Christian, and taking the greek nationality for living permanently in Greece. So, then they had a family with three nice children. Everything to this point it looks good and nice, but please do NOT forget something that he was narrating in his story from the beginning and that poor and non-wise greek lady did not notice when he met

him.

During the time that he was a student of medicine, he said that he has a hobby of playing cards and drinking alcoholic drinks, as well as, during the time that was a student of what? **The Science of Medicine**... his god was the god of a patriarch with the name Abraham that has the power to unite believers and their interests. But this Abraham with his god and as it has been proved already, are not strong enough to limit what ? The fear of death, the fear of life, the fear of pain, the fear of slavery etc to the fact leading every naive person to have also a total ignorance on how to make hedonic calculus and measuring where are the limits among pleasure and pain for the achievement of the goal of pleasure, and when we say pleasures we mean pure pleasures. Since we prefer the quality and not the quantity.

Anyway, after this couple's children were born and during a period of five years, that doctor was keeping his hobby, so that he was subscribing to the Banks for taking debit cards. He had, as he said, ten (10) debit cards fulling them to the limits of 10000 euros each, just for visiting casinos, drinking alcohol etc and this family, as the time is continued, it became a disaster and real mess. With the many efforts of that greek lady who was working in a court as secretary, and with the help of her parents, she was trying to change her husband's hobbies, for keeping united her family, and raising her children...but when the children became teenagers remembering from childhood that they did not have a father to bring in their family the natural and necessary, these children started to blame their father, and demanding of their mother to expel him from home and to divorce him....to the point that that doctor when he was narrating his life story, he lived alone in a home, he closed his medical office due to debts, and blaming his wife and children for all these.

And when he finished his narration, then my epicurean words to him were without mercy saying to him:

Hey, dear doctor it would be better to start blaming of yourself, since you were the incapable one to cure your soul/ mind's troubles. Won't it be better now to start blaming your stupid patriarch and his stupid god that makes you, your wife and your children to fear death, to fear life, to fear everything for the result all of you to feel pain in the ass?

Won't it better for you to study/observe Nature carefully which is also connected with the science that you have studied, for examining what was the real causes, the consequences and the results of your personal and painful experiences based on your desires to visit casinos and drinking alcoholic drinks leading your family to debts ?

What the heck, you became a doctor and you can't cure not even yourself from fears ? For me, and for many honest scientists and philosophers all religions are a narcotic like the opium that is based on dopamine. It is like someone to be thirsty drinking water without eliminating his thirst. The pleasures that come from serotonin, endorphins, oxytocine etc are really connected and by your offerings to your patients, through the science of medicine, and by the raising of your children, and by your happy and pleased wife that is the mother of your children, and by

many other activities that lead to the love, respect, honor and admiration to all of your family members, which all are the cells that lead to **healthy** societies in this world.

The conversation finished when I point out to him some links with the articles by some of my epicurean friends. It is a long time that I have to meet him, but I've learned recently that he was united with his family again. I did not examine if the doctrines of Epicurus and his philosophy, have helped him for being united again with his family, but I still hope so !

Post by “Don” of March 18, 2020 at 8:34 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

Eugenios where is that Bailey list found?

[Extant Remains, p.346](#) (Internet Archive link)

Post by “Cassius” of March 18, 2020 at 9:25 AM

Elli: Great story - thanks for posting - I hope you are able one day to give us an update.

Post by “Cassius” of March 18, 2020 at 9:31 AM

[Quote from Eugenios](#)

I will say that when you wrote:

Epicurus could not simply state a goal of "more pleasure than pain" without justifying that pleasure was in fact the goal.

I have to say, in a small way, I disagree with you in emphasis. I think Epicurus DID justify pleasure as the goal in how he laid out the entire Canon, Physics, and Ethics. Lucretius does the same. It wasn't that Epicurus just "stated the goal" that pleasure

was the goal. He built, from the ground up, a mighty fortress to defend that assertion with the flag of pleasure flying from the turrets! He continued to let fly arrows at his opponents through his writings until the Christian nuke ALMOST wiped him out. But eventually, "he" (as in his and his followers' works) could emerge from the underground bunker and begin some guerilla warfare.

Eugenios I was re-reading this and I realize that I don't think I understand your point in this passage. Are we both not saying exactly the same thing? The first priority and order of business of Epicurus was to establish that Pleasure is the goal of life, which the other Greek philosophers had disputed (and held otherwise in favor of wisdom, virtue, etc.)

So we agree that it was Epicurus' first priority to establish his reasoning as to why pleasure is the goal of life, and to point out the reasons why other philosophers' assertions were incorrect?

Post by “Don” of March 18, 2020 at 10:01 AM

Yes, I think we do agree. Epicurus built his whole philosophy to do this. Lucretius built his whole poem to establish why other philosophies and Religion, writ large, were unsatisfactory and even dangerous individually and as a society.

My contention through our discussion is just that I think you're trying to make this one brick (KD 10) do more work than it has to. It's just one brick in the fortress, holding up other bricks and being held up by others (to overuse my metaphor). ** think it's fine for this one brick to say the things giving pleasure to the profligate are not going to dispel their fears and teach them the limits of pleasure. Then we go on to other bricks to get more detail on the inadequacy of virtue as the goal of life, why we can't be Skeptics and still function in the world, why the study of nature is so important, and so on.