

Episode Forty - The Mind and Spirit Are Bodily, Composed of Very Fine Atoms

Post by "Cassius" of October 8, 2020 at 7:27 PM

Podcast 40 - The Mind and Spirit Are Bodily, Composed of Very Fine Atoms

Welcome to Episode Forty of Lucretius Today.

I am your host Cassius, and together with my panelists from the EpicureanFriends.com forum, we'll walk you through the six books of Lucretius' poem, and discuss how Epicurean philosophy can apply to you today. Be aware that none of us are professional philosophers, and everyone here is a self-taught Epicurean. We encourage you to study Epicurus for yourself, and we suggest the best place to start is the book, "Epicurus and His Philosophy" by Canadian professor Norman DeWitt.

Before we start, here are three ground rules.

First: Our aim is to bring you an accurate presentation of [classical Epicurean philosophy](#) as the ancient Epicureans understood it, which may or may not agree with what you here about Epicurus at other places today.

Second: We aren't talking about Lucretius with the goal of promoting any modern political perspective. Epicurus must be understood on his own, and not in terms of competitive schools which may seem similar to Epicurus, but are fundamentally different and incompatible, such as Stoicism, Humanism, Buddhism, Taoism, Atheism, and Marxism.

Third: The essential base of Epicurean philosophy is a fundamental view of the nature of the universe. When you read the words of Lucretius you will find that Epicurus did not teach the pursuit of virtue or of luxury or of simple living. or science, as ends in themselves, but rather the pursuit of pleasure. From this perspective it is **feeling** which is the guide to life, and not supernatural gods, idealism, or virtue ethics. And as important as anything else, Epicurus taught that there is no life after death, and that any happiness we will ever have must come in THIS life, which is why it is so important not to waste time in confusion.

Now let's join the discussion with today's text:

Latin Text Location 161 - 257

Munro Notes:

161 -176 : the animus and anima are therefore bodily also, since they can move and direct the body ; for this cannot be without touch nor touch without body : the animus too suffers with the body, when the latter is wounded : it must then be bodily, since it suffers from bodily weapons.

177 - 230 : the animus consists of very small round atoms, which can move with extreme celerity and ease; for nothing is so swift as thought : of visible things those which move most easily, as water, are composed of very small round elements : those of the animus then must be eminently subtle. Again the fineness and smallness of the substance of the animus and anima are shewn by this : after death, when they have left the body, it is not perceptibly diminished in size or weight; you may compare it with wine whose flavour is gone, or the like : the elements which compose this flavour are very minute; and their absence does not lessen the weight and bulk of the wine.

231 - 257: the animus is made up of spirit heat air and a fourth nameless substance, the finest and most nimble that can be conceived and made of the smallest and finest atoms : from it comes the beginning of sensation which thence spreads through the several parts of the body : the least pain or hurt, if it reach to this substance, will destroy life at once.

Browne:

This mind can think of itself alone, and of itself rejoice, when the soul and body are no ways affected; as when the head or the eye is hurt by sensible pain, we are not tormented over all the body, so the mind is sometimes grieved or cheered with joy, when the other part, the soul, diffused through the limbs, is agitated with no new motion at all. But when the mind is shaking with violent fear, we see the soul through all the limbs partakes of the same disorder. Cold sweats and paleness spread all of the body over, the tongue falters, the speech fails, the eyes grow dim, the ears tingle, and the limbs quake. In short, we often see men fall down from a terror of the mind, from whence we may easily conclude that the soul is united with the mind, and when she is pressed forcibly with its impulse, then she drives on the body, and puts it in motion.

By this rule therefore we find that the nature of the mind and soul is corporeal, for we see it shakes the limbs, rouses the body from sleep, changes the countenance, and directs and governs the whole man. (Nothing of which can be done without touch, and there can be no Touch without body.) Should we not then allow that the mind and soul are corporeal in their nature? Besides, you see the Mind suffers with the body, and bears a share with it and all it endures; if the violent force of a dart pierces the body, and shatters the bones and nerves, though death does not instantly follow, yet a faintness succeeds, and a sort of pleasing desire of sinking into the ground, a passionate resolution to die, and then again the will fluctuates and wishes to live: the Mind therefore must needs be of a corporeal nature, because It suffers pain by the stroke of darts, which we know are bodies.

I shall now go on to explain clearly of what sort of body this mind consists, and of what principles it is formed. And first I say that the mind is composed of very subtle and minute

seeds; that it is so, attend closely, and you will find that nothing is accomplished with so much speed as what the mind attempts, and proposes to execute. The Mind therefore is swifter in its motion than anything in nature we can see or conceive. But that which is so exceedingly quick to move must consist of the roundest and most minute seeds, that may be set a-going by the lightest impulse. So water is moved and disposed to flow by ever so little force, because it is composed of small and slippery seeds; but the nature of Honey is more tenacious, its moisture is more unactive, and its motion slower; its principles stick closer among themselves; and for this reason, because it consists of seeds not so smooth, so subtle, and so round. And thus a large heap of poppy seeds is blown away by the gentlest breath of wind, and scattered abroad; but no blast can shake a heap of stones or darts. Therefore the smoother and smaller the principles of bodies are, the more easily they are disposed to motion, and the heavier and rougher the seeds are, the more fixed and stable they remain.

Since therefore the nature of the mind is so exceedingly apt to move, it must needs consist of small, smooth, and round seeds; and your knowing this, my sweet youth, will be found of great use, and very seasonable for your future inquiries. This will discover clearly to you its nature, of what tenuous parts it is formed, and how small a space it might be contained, if it could be squeezed together. For when the calm of death has possession of a man, and the mind and soul are retired, you will find nothing taken away from the body as to its bulk; nothing as to its weight. Death leaves everything complete, except the vital sense and the warm breath; the whole soul therefore must needs be formed a very small seed, as it lies diffused through the veins, the bowels, and the nerves; because when it has wholly left every part of the body, the outward shape of the limbs remains entire, and they want not a hair of their weight. And this is the nature of wine, when the flavor of it is gone, and of ointments, when their sweet odors are evaporated into air. And thus it is, when any moisture perspires through the pores of the body, the bulk does not appear less to the eye, upon that account, nor is there anything taken off from the weight; for many and small are the seeds that compose the moisture and the smell in the contexture of all bodies. And therefore we may well assured that the nature of the mind and soul is formed of exceeding little principles, because when it leaves the body, it detracts nothing from the weight.

Munro:

It by itself alone knows for itself, rejoices for itself, at times when the impression does not move either soul or body together with it. And as when some part of us, the head or the eye, suffers from an attack of pain, we do not feel the anguish at the same time over the whole body, thus the mind sometimes suffers pain by itself or is inspirited with joy, when all the rest of the soul throughout the limbs and frame is stirred by no novel sensation. But when the mind is excited by some more vehement apprehension, we see the whole soul feel in unison through all the limbs, sweats and paleness spreadover the whole body, the tongue falter, the voice die away, a mist cover the eyes, the ears ring, the limbs sink under one; in short we often see men drop down from terror of mind; so that anybody may easily perceive from this that the soul is closely

united with the mind, and, when it has been smitten by the influence of the mind, forthwith pushes and strikes the body.

This same principle teaches that the nature of the mind and soul is bodily; for when it is seen to push the limbs, rouse the body from sleep, and alter the countenance and guide and turn about the whole man, and when we see that none of these effects can take place without touch nor touch without body, must we not admit that the mind and the soul are of a bodily nature? Again you perceive that our mind in our body suffers together with the body and feels in unison with it. When a weapon with a shudder-causing force has been driven in and has laid bare bones and sinews within the body, if it does not take life, yet there ensues a faintness and a lazy sinking to the ground and on the ground the turmoil of mind which arises, and sometimes a kind of undecided inclination to get up. Therefore the nature of the mind must be bodily, since it suffers from bodily weapons and blows.

I will now go on to explain in my verses of what kind of body the mind consists and out of what it is formed. First of all I say that it is extremely fine and formed of exceedingly minute bodies. That this is so you may, if you please to attend, clearly perceive from what follows: nothing that is seen takes place with a velocity equal to that of the mind when it starts some suggestion and actually sets it a-going; the mind therefore is stirred with greater rapidity than any of the things whose nature stands out visible to sight. But that which is so passing nimble, must consist of seeds exceedingly round and exceedingly minute, in order to be stirred and set in motion by a small moving power. Thus water is moved and heaves by ever so small a force, formed as it is of small particles apt to roll. But on the other hand the nature of honey is more sticky, its liquid more sluggish and its movement more dilatory; for the whole mass of matter coheres more closely, because sure enough it is made of bodies not so smooth fine and round. A breeze however gentle and light can force, as you may see, a high heap of poppy seed to be blown away from the top downwards; but on the other hand eurus itself cannot move a heap of stones. Therefore bodies possess a power of moving in proportion to their smallness and smoothness; and on the other hand the greater weight and roughness bodies prove to have, the more stable they are.

Since then the nature of the mind has been found to be eminently easy to move, it must consist of bodies exceedingly small smooth and round. The knowledge of which fact, my good friend, will on many accounts prove useful and be serviceable to you. The following fact too likewise demonstrates how fine the texture is of which its nature is composed, and how small the room is in which it can be contained, could it only be collected into one mass: soon as the untroubled sleep of death has gotten hold of a man and the nature of the mind and soul has withdrawn, you can perceive then no diminution of the entire body either in appearance or weight: death makes all good save the vital sense and heat. Therefore the whole soul must consist of very small seeds and be in woven through veins and flesh and sinews; inasmuch as after it has all withdrawn from the whole body, the exterior contour of the limbs preserves itself entire and not a tittle of the weight is lost. Just in the same way when the flavor of wine is gone or when the

delicious aroma of a perfume has been dispersed into the air or when the savor has left some body, yet the thing itself does not therefore look smaller to the eye, nor does aught seem to have been taken from the weight, because sure enough many minute seeds make up the savors and the odor in the whole body of the several things. Therefore, again and again I say, you are to know that the nature of the mind and the soul has been formed of exceedingly minute seeds, since at its departure it takes away none of the weight.

Bailey:

The mind alone by itself has understanding for itself and rejoices for itself, when no single thing stirs either soul or body. And just as, when head or eye hurts within us at the attack of pain, we are not tortured at the same time in all our body; so the mind sometimes feels pain by itself or waxes strong with joy, when all the rest of the soul through the limbs and frame is not roused by any fresh feeling. Nevertheless, when the understanding is stirred by some stronger fear, we see that the whole soul feels with it throughout the limbs, and then sweat and pallor break out over all the body, and the tongue is crippled and the voice is choked, the eyes grow misty, the ears ring, the limbs give way beneath us, and indeed we often see men fall down through the terror in their mind; so that any one may easily learn from this that the soul is linked in union with the mind; for when it is smitten by the force of the mind, straightway it strikes the body and pushes it on.

This same reasoning shows that the nature of mind and soul is bodily. For when it is seen to push on the limbs, to pluck the body from sleep, to change the countenance, and to guide and turn the whole man—none of which things we see can come to pass without touch, nor touch in its turn without body—must we not allow that mind and soul are formed of bodily nature? Moreover, you see that our mind suffers along with the body, and shares its feelings together in the body. If the shuddering shock of a weapon, driven within and laying bare bones and sinews, does not reach the life, yet faintness follows, and a pleasant swooning to the ground, and a turmoil of mind which comes to pass on the ground, and from time to time, as it were, a hesitating will to rise. Therefore it must needs be that the nature of the mind is bodily, since it is distressed by the blow of bodily weapons.

Now of what kind of body this mind is, and of what parts it is formed, I will go on to give account to you in my discourse. First of all I say that it is very fine in texture, and is made and formed of very tiny particles. That this is so, if you give attention, you may be able to learn from this. Nothing is seen to come to pass so swiftly as what the mind pictures to itself coming to pass and starts to do itself. Therefore the mind bestirs itself more quickly than any of the things whose nature is manifest for all to see. But because it is so very nimble, it is bound to be formed of exceeding round and exceeding tiny seeds, so that its particles may be able to move when smitten by a little impulse. For so water moves and oscillates at the slightest impulse, seeing it is formed of little particles, quick to roll. But, on the other hand, the nature of honey is more stable, its fluid more sluggish, and its movement more hesitating; for the whole mass of its matter clings more together, because, we may be sure, it is not formed of bodies so smooth,

nor so fine and round. For a light trembling breath can constrain a high heap of poppy-seed to scatter from top to bottom before your eyes: but, on the other hand, a pile of stones or corn-ears it can by no means separate. Therefore, in proportion as bodies are tinier and smoother, so they are gifted with nimbleness. But, on the other hand, all things that are found to be of greater weight or more spiky, the more firm set they are.

Now, therefore, since the nature of the mind has been found nimble beyond the rest, it must needs be formed of bodies exceeding small and smooth and round. And this truth, when known to you, will in many things, good friend, prove useful, and will be reckoned of service. This fact, too, declares the nature of the mind, of how thin a texture it is formed, and in how small a place it might be contained, could it be gathered in a mass; that as soon as the unruffled peace of death has laid hold on a man, and the nature of mind and soul has passed away, you could discern nothing there, that sight or weight can test, stolen from the entire body; death preserves all save the feeling of life, and some warm heat. And so it must needs be that the whole soul is made of very tiny seeds, and is linked on throughout veins, flesh, and sinews; inasmuch as, when it is all already gone from the whole body, yet the outer contour of the limbs is preserved unbroken, nor is a jot of weight wanting. Even so it is, when the flavour of wine has passed away or when the sweet breath of a perfume is scattered to the air, or when its savour is gone from some body; still the thing itself seems not a whit smaller to the eyes on that account, nor does anything seem withdrawn from its weight, because, we may be sure, many tiny seeds go to make flavours and scent in the whole body of things. Wherefore once and again you may know that the nature of the understanding and the soul is formed of exceeding tiny seeds, since when it flees away it carries with it no jot of weight.

Post by "Cassius" of October 9, 2020 at 5:47 AM

References to "Emergence" / "Emergent Properties" / "Emergent Qualities"- These may be the best terms, or at least the best current terms, to describe how elemental particles which are non-living can combine to produce something that is living (or how non-intelligent particles can combine to produce intelligence).

Quality / Event / Accident vs Property / Essential Conjoint In Lucretius Book One:

[420] All nature therefore, in itself considered, is one of these, is body or is space, in which all things are placed, and from which the various motions of all beings spring. That there is body common sense will show, this as a fundamental truth must be allowed, or there is nothing we can fix as certain in our pursuit of hidden things, by which to find the Truth, or prove it when 'tis found. Then if there were no place or space, we call it void, bodies would have no where to be, nor could they move at all, as we have fully proved to you before.

[431] Besides, there is nothing you can strictly say, "It is neither body nor void," which you may call a third degree of things distinct from these. For every being must in quantity be more or less; and if it can be touched, though ne'er so small or light, it must be body, and so esteemed; but if it can't be touched, and has not in itself a power to stop the course of other bodies as they pass, this is the void we call an empty space.

[439] Again, whatever is must either act itself, or be by other agents acted on; or must be something in which other bodies must have a place and move; but nothing without body can act, or be acted on; and where can this be done, but in a vacuum or empty space? Therefore, beside what body is or space, no third degree in nature can be found, nothing that ever can affect our sense, or by the power of thought can be conceived. All other things you'll find essential conjuncts, or else the events or accidents of these. I call essential conjunct what's so joined to a thing that it cannot, without fatal violence, be forced or parted from it; is weight to stones, to fire heat, moisture to the Sea, touch to all bodies, and not to be touched essential is to void. But, on the contrary, Bondage, Liberty, Riches, Poverty, War, Concord, or the like, which not affect the nature of the thing, but when they come or go, the thing remains entire; these, as it is fit we should, we call Events.

[460] Time likewise of itself is nothing; our sense collects from things themselves what has been done long since, the thing that present is, and what's to come. For no one, we must own, ever thought of Time distinct from things in motion or at rest.

[465] For when the poets sing of Helen's rape, or of the Trojan State subdued by war, we must not say that these things do exist now in themselves, since Time, irrevocably past, has long since swept away that race of men that were the cause of those events; for every act is either properly the event of things, or of the places where those things are done.

[472] Further, if things were not of matter formed, were there no place or space where things might act, the fire that burned in Paris' heart, blown up by love of Helen's beauty, had never raised the famous contests of a cruel war; nor had the wooden horse set Troy on fire, discharging from his belly in the night the armed Greeks: from whence you plainly see that actions do not of themselves subsist, as bodies do, nor are in nature such as is a void, but rather are more justly called the events of body, and of space, where things are carried on.

[484] Lastly, bodies are either the first seeds of things, or formed by the uniting of those seeds. The simple seeds of things no force can strain, their solid parts will never be subdued. Though it is difficult, I own, to think that any thing in nature can be found perfectly solid; for heaven's thunder passes through the walls of houses, just as sound or words; iron in the fire grows hot, and burning stones fly into pieces by the raging heat; the stiffness of the gold is loosed by fire, and made to run; the hard and solid brass, subdued by flames, dissolves; the heat and piercing cold passes through silver; both of these we find as in our hand we hold a cup, and at the top pour water hot or cold: so nothing wholly solid seems to be found in nature. But because reason and the fixed state of things oblige me, here, I beg, while in few verses we evince that there are

beings that consist of solid and everlasting matter which we call the seeds, the first principles of things, from whence the whole of things begin to be.

[Emergence at Wikipedia](#)

Aristotle, *Metaphysics (Aristotle)*, Book H 1045a 8-10: "... the totality is not, as it were, a mere heap, but the whole is something besides the parts ...", i.e., the whole is other than the sum of the parts.

[Of the Composition of Causes \(1859\) - John Stuart Mill :](#)

This law of nature is called, in mechanical philosophy, the principle of the Composition of Forces: and in imitation of that well-chosen expression, I shall give the name of the Composition of Causes to the principle which is exemplified in all cases in which the joint effect of several causes is identical with the sum of their separate effects.

This principle, however, by no means prevails in all departments of the field of nature. The chemical combination of two substances produces, as is well known, a third substance with properties entirely different from those of either of the two substances separately, or of both of them taken together. Not a trace of the properties of hydrogen or of oxygen is observable in those of their compound, water. The taste of sugar of lead is not the sum of the tastes of its component elements, acetic acid and lead or its oxide; nor is the color of green vitriol a mixture of the colors of sulphuric acid and copper. This explains why mechanics is a deductive or demonstrative science, and chemistry not. In the one, we can compute the effects of all combinations of causes, whether real or hypothetical, from the laws which we know to govern those causes when acting separately; because they continue to observe the same laws when in combination, which they observed when separate: whatever would have happened in consequence of each cause taken by itself, happens when they are together, and we have only to cast up the results. Not so in the phenomena which are the peculiar subject of the science of chemistry. There, most of the uniformities to which the causes conformed when separate, cease altogether when they are conjoined; and we are not, at least in the present state of our knowledge, able to foresee what result will follow from any new combination, until we have tried it by specific experiment.

If this be true of chemical combinations, it is still more true of those far more complex combinations of elements which constitute organized bodies; and in which those extraordinary new uniformities arise, which are called the laws of life. All organized bodies are composed of parts, similar to those composing inorganic nature, and which have even themselves existed in an inorganic state; but the phenomena of life, which result from the juxtaposition of those parts in a certain manner, bear no analogy to any of the effects which would be produced by the action of the component substances considered as mere physical agents. To whatever degree we might imagine our knowledge of the properties of the several ingredients of a living body to

be extended and perfected, it is certain that no mere summing up of the separate actions of those elements will ever amount to the action of the living body itself. The tongue, for instance, is, like all other parts of the animal frame, composed of gelatine, fibrin, and other products of the chemistry of digestion, but from no knowledge of the properties of those substances could we ever predict that it could taste, unless gelatine or fibrin could themselves taste; for no elementary fact can be in the conclusion, which was not first in the premisses.

[Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy on Emergence \(article one\)](#)

[Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy on Emergence \(article two\)](#)

Charles helped me find the article below. Unfortunately it's focused on obscure modern writers so I don't find it useful.

AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY
Volume 31, Number 2, April 1994

EMERGENT PROPERTIES

Timothy O'Connor

All organized bodies are composed of parts, similar to those composing inorganic nature, and which have even themselves existed in an inorganic state; but the phenomena of life, which result from the juxtaposition of those parts in a certain manner, bear no analogy to any of the effects which would be produced by the action of the component substances considered as mere physical agents. To whatever degree we might imagine our knowledge of the properties of the several ingredients of a living body to be extended and perfected, it is certain that no mere summing up of the separate actions of those elements will ever amount to the action of the living body itself.

—J.S. MILL, *A System of Logic*, Bk. III, Ch. 6, §1

IN attempting to develop an ontology adequate to account for some of the more puzzling features of the natural world, several philosophers and scientists in the past century have tried to articulate a *via media* between the extremes of radical dualism and reductionism. This middle road consists in the claim that the phenomenon in question is at once grounded in and yet emergent from the underlying material structure with which it is associated. At various times, this claim has been made with regard to the so-

phetheses about the mental in recent days. Sections I-II concern some of the major formulations of the concept of property emergence and pointing out their weaknesses, before I provide an alternative account in section III. My criticisms of these earlier approaches do not take the form of charging that they fail to accord with a pre-analytic notion, since whatever content has come to be associated with this term through previous philosophical usage is sufficiently vague as to

Post by “Cassius” of October 9, 2020 at 10:06 AM

It's also relevant to discussing how mind and spirit relate to the atoms to recall this from the latter part of book two, in support of the point that things that have sense (the mind? spirit?) arise from things that do not have sense (the combinations of elements and void):

Next then, what is it, that strikes on the very mind, which stirs it and constrains to utter diverse thoughts, that you may not believe that the sensible is begotten of the insensible? We may be sure it is that stones and wood and earth mixed together yet cannot give out vital sense. Herein it will be right to remember this, that **I do not say that sensations are begotten at once from all and every of the things which give birth to sensible things, but that it is of**

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/1716-episode-forty-the-mind-and-spirit-are-bodily-composed-of-very-fine-atoms/>

great matter, first of what size are these bodies, which create the sensible, and with what form they are endowed, then what they are in their motions, arrangements and positions. And none of these things can we perceive in logs and sods; and yet, when they are, as it were, made muddy through the rains, they give birth to little worms, because the bodies of matter stirred by the newcomer from their old arrangements are brought into union in the way in which living things are bound to be begotten. Next, those who think that the sensible could be created out of sensible bodies which in turn were used to owe their sense to others, [these make the seeds of their own sense mortal], when they make them soft. For all sensation is linked to flesh, sinews and veins, which we see are always soft in nature built up of mortal body.

But still let us grant now that these can abide for ever: still doubtless they must either have the sense proper to a part, or be thought to be of a sense like to that of whole living things. **But it must needs be that the parts cannot have sense by themselves;** for all sensation in the limbs depends on us, nor severed from us can the hand nor any part of the body at all keep sensation by itself. It remains that they are made like whole living things. Thus it must needs be that they feel likewise what we feel, so that they may be able to share with us in every place in the vital sensations. How then will they be able to be called the first-beginnings of things and to shun the paths of death, since they are living things, and living things are one and the same with mortal things? Yet grant that they can, still by their meeting and union, they will make nothing besides a crowd and mob of living things, even as, as you may know, men, herds of cattle and wild beasts could not beget anything by coming together with one another. But if by chance they lose their own sense, when inside a body, and receive another, what good was it that that should be assigned to them which is taken away? Then, moreover, as we saw before, inasmuch as we perceive the eggs of birds turn into living chickens, and worms swarm out when mud has seized on the earth owing to immoderate rains, we may know that sensations can be begotten out of that which is not sensation.

But if by chance any one shall say that sensation can in any case arise from not-sensation by change of substance or, as it were, by a kind of birth, by which it is thrust out into being, it will be enough to make clear and prove to him that birth cannot come to be, unless when a union has been formed before, nor is anything changed except after union. First of all, no body at all can have sensation before the nature of the living thing is itself begotten, because, we may be sure, its substance is scattered abroad and is kept in the air, in streams, in earth and things sprung from earth, nor has it come together in appropriate way and combined with one another the vital motions, whereby the all-seeing senses are kindled and see to the safety of each living thing.

Moreover, a heavier blow than its nature can endure, of a sudden fells any living creature, and hastens to stun all the sensations of its body and mind. For the positions of the first-beginnings are broken up and the vital motions are checked deep within, until the substance, after the shock throughout all the limbs, loosens the vital clusters of the soul from the body, scatters it

abroad and drives it out through every pore. For what else are we to think that a blow can do when it meets each thing, but shake it to pieces and break it up? It comes to pass too, that when a blow meets us with less force, the vital motions that remain are often wont to win, yea, to win and to allay the vast disturbances of the blow and summon each part back again into its proper path, and to shake to pieces the movement of death that now, as it were, holds sway in the body, and to kindle the sensations almost lost. For by what other means could living things gather their wits and turn back to life even from the very threshold of death rather than pass on, whither their race is already almost run, and pass away?

Moreover, since there is pain when the bodies of matter, disturbed by some force throughout the living flesh and limbs, tremble each in their abode within, and when they settle back into their place, comforting pleasure comes to pass, you may know that the first-beginnings cannot be assailed by any pain, and can find no pleasure in themselves: inasmuch as they are not made of any bodies of first-beginnings, through whose newness of movement they may be in pain or find any enjoyment of life-giving delight. They are bound then not to be endowed with any sensation.

Again, if, in order that all living things may be able to feel, we must after all assign sensation to their first-beginnings, what of those whereof the race of men has its peculiar increment? You must think that they are shaken with quivering mirth and laugh aloud and sprinkle face and cheeks with the dew of their tears. And they have the wit to say much about the mingling of things, and they go on to ask what are their first-beginnings; inasmuch as, being made like to whole mortal men, they too must needs be built of other particles in their turn, and those again of others, so that you may never dare to make a stop: nay, I will press hard on you, so that, whatsoever you say speaks and laughs and thinks, shall be composed of other particles which do these same things. But if we perceive this to be but raving madness, and a man can laugh, though he has not the increment of laughing atoms, and can think and give reasons with learned lore, though he be not made of seeds thoughtful and eloquent, why should those things, which, as we see, have feeling, any the less be able to exist, mingled of seeds which lack sense in every way?

Post by “Cassius” of October 11, 2020 at 10:33 AM

Link from Charles: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/21_grams_experiment

Post by “Cassius” of October 17, 2020 at 11:23 AM

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/1716-episode-forty-the-mind-and-spirit-are-bodily-composed-of-very-fine-atoms/>

Episode Forty of the Lucretius Today Podcast is now available. Today's episode is from Book Three, and focuses on the argument that both "mind" and "spirit" are corporeal. As always we invite your comments and suggestions.

<https://www.spreaker.com/episode/41509740>

Post by “Cassius” of October 17, 2020 at 4:30 PM

Godfrey has started a separate thread on the relationship of Epicurean preconceptions to what Plato was talking about. We can pursue that here: [Phaedo and prolepses](#)

Post by “Godfrey” of October 18, 2020 at 3:37 PM

I just finished this episode and you covered quite a bit of what I've noticed regarding "Fido" v prolepses: we seem to have "cross posted," as it were.

Excellent episode, lots of informative discussion! Discussing Plato is very useful to better understand Epicurus, although it's pretty discouraging to consider that Plato is taught so extensively and Epicurus hardly at all.

As an aside, I'm finding reading Plato to be much easier now that I'm grounded in Epicurus. When I was much younger, with no exposure to philosophy, it was kind of infuriating but challenging. Now it reads as comedy, although for comedic reading Lucian writes better dialogs. 😊

Post by “Cassius” of October 18, 2020 at 4:08 PM

Just got back in from driving and wanted to post this point: probably we need to find where Aristotle rejected the recollection / form argument and changed it into "essences" that reside within a thing, rather than outside (or at least that is my understanding of his position).

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/1716-episode-forty-the-mind-and-spirit-are-bodily-composed-of-very-fine-atoms/>