

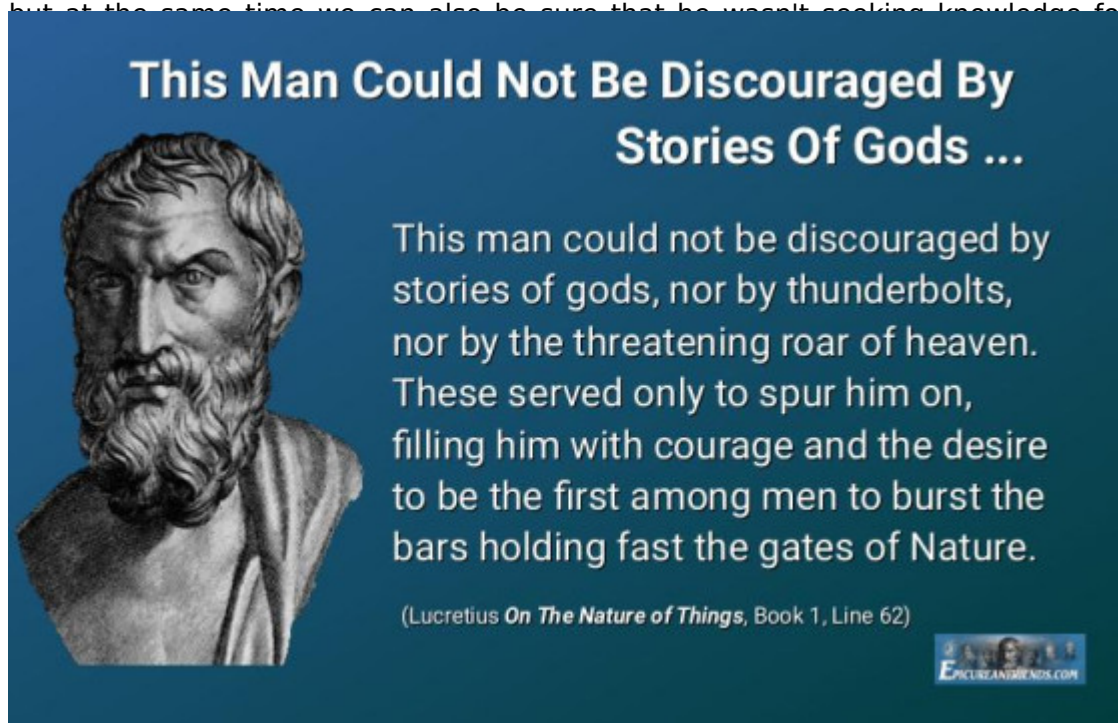
Foundations 002 - This Man Could Not Be Discouraged By Stories of Gods...

Post by "Cassius" of July 28, 2021 at 9:17 AM

This man could not be discouraged by stories of gods, nor by thunderbolts, nor by the threatening roar of heaven. These served only to spur him on, filling him with courage and the desire to be the first among men to burst the bars holding fast the gates of Nature. (Lucretius Book 1, Line 62)

It appears to me that this passage in Lucretius is emphasizing that Epicurus wasn't discouraged either by the stories of the gods that he heard from other men, or by the phenomena of the sky that he could not explain. To the contrary, he used those to build his own enthusiasm for finding out the truth and responding to them, rather than allowing them to wear him out and get discouraged.

I'd also say that he probably wasn't primarily motivated to "be the first among men" to do this, but at the same time we can also be sure that he wasn't seeking knowledge for the sake of knowledge. He would not be discouraged by these things and delight in them.



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Post by “Don” of July 28, 2021 at 1:35 PM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

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I would add that he didn't necessarily aim to "finding out the truth" but rather, it seems from the sources, to coming up with enough plausible, physical explanations that would rule out the need for any supernatural intervention.

Post by “Cassius” of July 28, 2021 at 3:10 PM

[Quote from Don](#)

to coming up with enough plausible, physical explanations that would rule out the need for any supernatural intervention.

I think that's another way of getting at something we need to articulate better - describing the "degree of confidence" that is involved in "ruling out" something. It is very easy for radical skeptics to say "You haven't been everywhere / You haven't been around forever / You don't know everything" therefore it COULD be possible that supernatural intervention is real.

I think a large part of what Epicurus was after was developing a "system" for being able to answer that kind of skepticism, which means giving us a framework to know when to have confidence and when not to -- meaning, when we can "rule out" something and when we can't.

It's not simply a matter of "reason" or "rationality" either, since those are necessarily based on the senses, and our ultimate standard of truth is not "reason" or "logic" or "rationality." Articulating that is tricky but it's an important part of the system.

Post by “Cassius” of July 29, 2021 at 8:47 AM

Here is a physics video very relevant to this topic, thanks to Camotero!

Post

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2118-foundations-002-this-man-could-not-be-discouraged-by-stories-of-gods/>

Not all research is scientific, or involves critical thinking.

This can be clarifying of the concept that reason alone is not sufficient to know the truth, and I'm guessing you'll enjoy it:

youtu.be/f23eWOquFQ0



Mathitis Kipouros

July 29, 2021 at 12:05 AM