

# Episode One Hundred Twenty-Two - Letter to Herodotus 10 - What it Means to "Exist" - Properties and Qualities

**Post by "Cassius" of May 14, 2022 at 10:15 PM**

Welcome to Episode One Hundred Twenty Two of Lucretius Today.

This is a podcast dedicated to the poet Lucretius, who wrote "On The Nature of Things," the only complete presentation of Epicurean philosophy left to us from the ancient world.

I am your host Cassius, and together with our panelists from the EpicureanFriends.com forum, we'll walk you through the ancient Epicurean texts, and we'll discuss how Epicurean philosophy can apply to you today. 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.

If you find the Epicurean worldview attractive, we invite you to join us in the study of Epicurus at EpicureanFriends.com, where you will find a discussion thread for each of our podcast episodes and many other topics.

Today we continue in [Epicurus' letter to Herodotus](#), and address some difficult material about the properties and qualities of atoms and bodies and what it means to exist. We probably raise more issues than we answer in this episode, so please review the show notes and we will come back to these issues in the next show.

Now let's join Joshua reading today's text:

Bailey

[67] Furthermore, we must clearly comprehend as well, that the incorporeal in the general acceptance of the term is applied to that which could be thought of as such as an independent existence. Now it is impossible to conceive the incorporeal as a separate existence, except the void: and the void can neither act nor be acted upon, but only provides opportunity of motion through itself to bodies. So that those who say that the soul is incorporeal are talking idly. For it would not be able to act or be acted on in any respect, if it were of this nature. But as it is, both these occurrences are clearly distinguished in respect of the soul.

[68] Now if one refers all these reasonings about the soul to the standards of feeling and sensation and remembers what was said at the outset, he will see that they are sufficiently embraced in these general formulae to enable him to work out with certainty on this basis the

details of the system as well.

[69] Moreover, as regards shape and colour and size and weight and all other things that are predicated of body, as though they were concomitant properties either of all things or of things visible or recognizable through the sensation of these qualities, we must not suppose that they are either independent existences (for it is impossible to imagine that), nor that they absolutely do not exist, nor that they are some other kind of incorporeal existence accompanying body, nor that they are material parts of body: rather we should suppose that the whole body in its totality owes its own permanent existence to all these, yet not in the sense that it is composed of properties brought together to form it (as when, for instance, a larger structure is put together out of the parts which compose it, whether the first units of size or other parts smaller than itself, whatever it is), but only, as I say, that it owes its own permanent existence to all of them.

All these properties have their own peculiar means of being perceived and distinguished, provided always that the aggregate body goes along with them and is never wrested from them, but in virtue of its comprehension as an aggregate of qualities acquires the predicate of body.

[70] Furthermore, there often happen to bodies and yet do not permanently accompany them accidents, of which we must suppose neither that they do not exist at all nor that they have the nature of a whole body, nor that they can be classed among unseen things nor as incorporeal. So that when according to the most general usage we employ this name, we make it clear that accidents have neither the nature of the whole, which we comprehend in its aggregate and call body, nor that of the qualities which permanently accompany it, without which a given body cannot be conceived.

[71] But as the result of certain acts of apprehension, provided the aggregate body goes along with them, they might each be given this name, but only on occasions when each one of them is seen to occur, since accidents are not permanent accompaniments. And we must not banish this clear vision from the realm of existence, because it does not possess the nature of the whole to which it is joined nor that of the permanent accompaniments, nor must we suppose that such contingencies exist independently (for this is inconceivable both with regard to them and to the permanent properties), but, just as it appears in sensation, we must think of them all as accidents occurring to bodies, and that not as permanent accompaniments, or again as having in themselves a place in the ranks of material existence; rather they are seen to be just what our actual sensation shows their proper character to be.

HICKS

[67] There is the further point to be considered, what the incorporeal can be, if, I mean, according to current usage the term is applied to what can be conceived as self-existent. But it is impossible to conceive anything that is incorporeal as self-existent except empty space. And empty space cannot itself either act or be acted upon, but simply allows body to move through

it. Hence those who call soul incorporeal speak foolishly. For if it were so, it could neither act nor be acted upon. But, as it is, both these properties, you see, plainly belong to soul.

[68] If, then, we bring all these arguments concerning soul to the criterion of our feelings and perceptions, and if we keep in mind the proposition stated at the outset, we shall see that the subject has been adequately comprehended in outline: which will enable us to determine the details with accuracy and confidence.

[69] Moreover, shapes and colours, magnitudes and weights, and in short all those qualities which are predicated of body, in so far as they are perpetual properties either of all bodies or of visible bodies, are knowable by sensation of these very properties: these, I say, must not be supposed to exist independently by themselves (for that is inconceivable), nor yet to be non-existent, nor to be some other and incorporeal entities cleaving to body, nor again to be parts of body. We must consider the whole body in a general way to derive its permanent nature from all of them, though it is not, as it were, formed by grouping them together in the same way as when from the particles themselves a larger aggregate is made up, whether these particles be primary or any magnitudes whatsoever less than the particular whole. All these qualities, I repeat, merely give the body its own permanent nature.

They all have their own characteristic modes of being perceived and distinguished, but always along with the whole body in which they inhere and never in separation from it; and it is in virtue of this complete conception of the body as a whole that it is so designated.

[70] Again, qualities often attach to bodies without being permanent concomitants. They are not to be classed among invisible entities nor are they incorporeal. Hence, using the term 'accidents' in the commonest sense, we say plainly that 'accidents' have not the nature of the whole thing to which they belong, and to which, conceiving it as a whole, we give the name of body, nor that of the permanent properties without which body cannot be thought of.

[71] And in virtue of certain peculiar modes of apprehension into which the complete body always enters, each of them can be called an accident. But only as often as they are seen actually to belong to it, since such accidents are not perpetual concomitants. There is no need to banish from reality this clear evidence that the accident has not the nature of that whole – by us called body – to which it belongs, nor of the permanent properties which accompany the whole. Nor, on the other hand, must we suppose the accident to have independent existence (for this is just as inconceivable in the case of accidents as in that of the permanent properties); but, as is manifest, they should all be regarded as accidents, not as permanent concomitants, of bodies, nor yet as having the rank of independent existence. Rather they are seen to be exactly as and what sensation itself makes them individually claim to be.

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**Post by “Cassius” of May 15, 2022 at 11:43 AM**

Cites relevant to today's topic:

U244

**\*\*Sextus Empiricus, *Against the Logicians* II (*Against the Dogmatists*, II).9:\*\*** Epicurus said that all sensibles were true and real. For there is no difference between saying that something is true and that it is real. And that is why, in giving a formalization of the true and the false, he says, "that which is such as it is said to be, is true" and "that which is not such as it is said to be, is false."

Letter to Herodotus

[51] For the similarity between the things which exist, which we call real and the images received as a likeness of things and produced either in sleep or through some other acts of apprehension on the part of the mind or the other instruments of judgment, could never be, unless there were some effluences of this nature actually brought into contact with our senses. And error would not exist unless another kind of movement too were produced inside ourselves, closely linked to the apprehension of images, but differing from it; and it is owing to this, supposing it is not confirmed, or is contradicted, that falsehood arises; but if it is confirmed or not contradicted, it is true.

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## Post by "Cassius" of May 19, 2022 at 9:07 PM

Working on editing this now. I am tempted to say it is a mess, but at least the part I have edited so far is an intelligent discussion of the issue. I will try to edit out anything that's a clear misstatement or unnecessarily confusing.

Listening causes me to ask:

Does Joshua "exist?" Let's presume the answer is yes.

Is Joshua's existence a "property" of Joshua's atoms?

I think the answer is that it depends on what we mean by property, but if we drill down into what Epicurus was talking about and try to find a bright line between "properties" and "qualities / accidents / events," I think that probably the best wording is that Joshua is a "quality" of his atoms coming together into a body of particular configuration.

I don't read this as saying that individual atoms have qualities --- only after they come together into bodies do "qualities" exist.

Is it correct to say that a "body" has "properties"? It would seem so, because I think in Lucretius there are examples of using the term property to describe attributes that can't be removed from a thing without destroying its essential nature.

I think what I am getting at here is that it would probably help to try to agree on a terminology so as to explain all this:

1 - Something to the effect that only atoms have eternal "unchanging properties;"

2 - But that when atoms come together to form bodies they have "qualities"

3 - That bodies can also have "properties" that are not changeable without destroying the nature of the body.

4- And that bodies also have "qualities" that do change according to context, but with the qualities limited in number of possibilities by the properties of the bodies, which themselves are tied to the properties of the atoms that gave rise to them.

No doubt this is convoluted and needs substantial revision, but I think these issues are what the episode and this section of the text are really about.

These considerations seem to be the determinants of whether we should regard something as "existing" or "possibly existing" versus the bright line that separates them from that which is "impossible to exist."

The overall picture still seems to me to be a discussion of how we use the theory of atoms and void to make sense of the world around us and to separate "what does or can exist." from "that which is impossible to exist." Which may sound simple but would have significant implications on everything else from theory of knowledge to religion to life after death etc.

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## **Post by “Cassius” of May 19, 2022 at 9:13 PM**

We spent a lot of time in the first twenty minutes talking about "independent existence" but I think the whole issue probably resolves into the question of "What is real?" that we began to address around twenty minutes into the episode.

Then we proceed to talk about whether "independent existence" implies "eternal existence." If so how, if not, why not?

## Post by "Cassius" of May 19, 2022 at 10:29 PM

Episode 122 of the Lucretius Today Podcast is now available. Today we continue in [Epicurus' letter to Herodotus](#), and address some difficult material about the properties and qualities of atoms and bodies and what it means to exist. Please let us know any comments or questions you have in the thread below, and please be sure to subscribe to the podcast on your telephone or other podcast aggregator.

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## Post by "Cassius" of May 20, 2022 at 6:35 AM

**Here is the key section in Lucretius Book One that gives us a little more detail. First is a key line - 449 - translated by Brown as "All other things you'll find essential conjuncts, or else the events or accidents of these."**

**Then Whitaker's Words for "eventa" and "conjuncta" and the etymology of the English "accident."**

**Then the translations: first is the Brown translation, numbered according to Loeb. I start with Brown because he alone uses "event" and "essential conjunct" rather than keeping always to "accident." Then follows Bailey, Munro, and the Latin.**

Look especially at line 449, for which the Latin is:

*449 Nam quae cumque cluent, aut his coniuncta duabus rebus ea invenies aut horum eventa videbis.*

*Whitaker's Words for Eventa:*


Code



From late 15c. as "the operations of chance." Meaning "an unplanned child" is attested by 1932. **Accident-prone** is from 1926.

## Definition Of Accident / Meaning

- An unforeseen and unplanned event or circumstance. Example: Their meeting was an accident .
- An unfortunate event resulting especially from carelessness or ignorance. Example: Was involved in a traffic accident.
- An unexpected and medically important bodily event especially when injurious. Example: A cerebrovascular accident.
- An unexpected happening causing loss or injury which is not due to any fault or misconduct on the part of the person injured but for which legal relief may be sought.
- A nonessential property or quality of an entity or circumstance. Example: The accident of nationality.

Data from merriam-webster.com. See source •  Feedback

**This is why I think Brown is more accurate to the original sense. The fact that Joshua's atoms have combined to form Joshua and that they cannot be ultimately dispersed without destroying Joshua is an "event" of these atoms, and implies that their current arrangement is an "essential conjunct" to being Joshua. Joshua is an "emergent quality" of the arrangement of his atoms. These facts - Joshua's atoms making up Joshua - are in no way "mishaps" or "undesirable events" as implied when we refer to something in English today as "accidental." Sticking with the word "event" does not in English have a connotation of being undesirable.**

**Now the texts:**

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2516-episode-one-hundred-twenty-two-letter-to-herodotus-10-what-it-means-to-exist-pro/>

[418] 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.

[430] 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 never 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. 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.

[449] 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. 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.

[464] 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. 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.

**Bailey, who the latest free public domain, uses "accidents" all the way through instead of "essential conjuncts" and "events" -**

[418] But now, to weave again at the web, which is the task of my discourse, all nature then, as it is of itself, is built of these two things: for there are bodies and the void, in which they are placed and where they move hither and thither. For that body exists is declared by the feeling which all share alike; and unless faith in this feeling be firmly grounded at once and prevail, there will be naught to which we can make appeal about things hidden, so as to prove aught by the reasoning of the mind. And next, were there not room and empty space, which we call void, nowhere could bodies be placed, nor could they wander at all hither and thither in any direction; and this I have above shown to you but a little while before.

[430] Besides these there is nothing which you could say is parted from all body and sundered from void, which could be discovered, as it were a third nature in the list. For whatever shall exist, must needs be something in itself; and if it suffer touch, however small and light, it will increase the count of body by a bulk great or maybe small, if it exists at all, and be added to its sum. But if it is not to be touched, inasmuch as it cannot on any side check anything from wandering through it and passing on its way, in truth it will be that which we call empty void. Or again, whatsoever exists by itself, will either do something or suffer itself while other things act upon it, or it will be such that things may exist and go on in it. But nothing can do or suffer without body, nor afford room again, unless it be void and empty space. And so besides void and bodies no third nature by itself can be left in the list of things, which might either at any time fall within the purview of our senses, or be grasped by any one through reasoning of the mind.

[449] For all things that have a name, you will find either properties linked to these two things or you will see them to be their accidents. That is a property which in no case can be sundered or separated without the fatal disunion of the thing, as is weight to rocks, heat to fire, moisture to water, touch to all bodies, intangibility to the void. On the other hand, slavery, poverty, riches, liberty, war, concord, and other things by whose coming and going the nature of things abides untouched, these we are used, as is natural, to call accidents. Even so time exists not by itself, but from actual things comes a feeling, what was brought to a close in time past, then what is present now, and further what is going to be hereafter. And it must be avowed that no man feels time by itself apart from the motion or quiet rest of things.

[464] Then again, when men say that 'the rape of Tyndarus's daughter', or 'the vanquishing of the Trojan tribes in war' are things, beware that they do not perchance constrain us to avow that these things exist in themselves, just because the past ages have carried off beyond recall those races of men, of whom, in truth, these were the accidents. For firstly, we might well say that whatsoever has happened is an accident in one case of the countries, in another even of the regions of space. Or again, if there had been no substance of things nor place and space, in which all things are carried on, never would the flame of love have been fired by the beauty of Tyndaris, nor swelling deep in the Phrygian heart of Alexander have kindled the burning battles of savage war, nor unknown of the Trojans would the timber horse have set Pergama aflame at dead of night, when the sons of the Greeks issued from its womb. So that you may see clearly

that all events from first to last do not exist, and are not by themselves like body, nor can they be spoken of in the same way as the being of the void, but rather so that you might justly call them the accidents of body and place, in which they are carried on, one and all.

**Munro, usually the most literal, also uses "accidents" -**

[418] But now to resume the thread of the design which I am weaving in verse. All nature then, as it exists by itself, is founded on two things: there are bodies and there is void in which these bodies are placed and through which they move about. For that body exists by itself the general feeling of man kind declares; and unless at the very first belief in this be firmly grounded, there will be nothing to which we can appeal on hidden things in order to prove anything by reasoning of mind. Then again, if room and space which we call void did not exist, bodies could not be placed anywhere nor move about at all to any side; as we have demonstrated to you a little before.

[430] Moreover there is nothing which you can affirm to be at once separate from all body and quite distinct from void, which would so to say count as the discovery of a third nature. For whatever shall exist, this of itself must be something or other. Now if it shall admit of touch in however slight and small a measure, it will, be it with a large or be it with a little addition, provided it do exist, increase the amount of body and join the sum. But if it shall be intangible and unable to hinder any thing from passing through it on any side, this you are to know will be that which we call empty void. Again whatever shall exist by itself, will either do something or will itself suffer by the action of other things, or will be of such a nature as things are able to exist and go on in. But no thing can do and suffer without body, nor aught furnish room except void and vacancy. Therefore beside void and bodies no third nature taken by itself can be left in the number of things, either such as to fall at any time under the ken of our senses or such as any one can grasp by the reason of his mind.

[449] For whatever things are named, you will either find to be properties linked to these two things or you will see to be accidents of these things. That is a property which can in no case be disjoined and separated without utter destruction accompanying the severance, such as the weight of a stone, the heat of fire, the fluidity of water. Slavery on the other hand, poverty and riches, liberty war concord and all other things which may come and go while the nature of the thing remains unharmed, these we are wont, as it is right we should, to call accidents. Time also exists not by itself, but simply from the things which happen the sense apprehends what has been done in time past, as well as what is present and what is to follow after. And we must admit that no one feels time by itself abstracted from the motion and calm rest of things.

[464] So when they say that the daughter of Tyndarus was ravished and the Trojan nations were subdued in war, we must mind that they do not force us to admit that these things are by themselves, since those generations of men, of whom these things were accidents, time now gone by has irrevocably swept away. For whatever shall have been done may be termed an accident in one case of the Teucran people, in another of the countries simply. Yes for if there

had been no matter of things and no room and space in which things severally go on, never had the fire, kindled by love of the beauty of Tyndarus' daughter, blazed beneath the Phrygian breast of Alexander and lighted up the famous struggles of cruel war, nor had the timber horse unknown to the Trojans wrapt Pergama in flames by its night-issuing brood of sons of the Greeks; so that you may clearly perceive that all actions from first to last exist not by themselves and are not by themselves in the way that body is, nor are terms of the same kind as void is, but are rather of such a kind that you may fairly call them accidents of body and of the room in which they severally go on.

### **The Latin from Latin Library:**

418 Sed nunc ut repetam coeptum pertexere dictis,

omnis ut est igitur per se natura duabus

constitit in rebus; nam corpora sunt et inane, 420

haec in quo sita sunt et qua diversa moventur.

corpus enim per se communis dedicat esse

sensus; cui nisi prima fides fundata valebit,

haut erit occultis de rebus quo referentes

confirmare animi quicquam ratione queamus. 425

tum porro locus ac spatium, quod inane vocamus,

si nullum foret, haut usquam sita corpora possent

esse neque omnino quoquam diversa meare;

id quod iam supera tibi paulo ostendimus ante.

430 praeterea nihil est quod possis dicere ab omni 430

corpore seiunctum secretumque esse ab inani,

quod quasi tertia sit numero natura reperta.

nam quod cumque erit, esse aliquid debebit id ipsum

augmine vel grandi vel parvo denique, dum sit;

cui si tactus erit quamvis levis exiguusque, 435

corporis augebit numerum summamque sequetur;

sin intactile erit, nulla de parte quod ullam

rem prohibere queat per se transire meantem,

scilicet hoc id erit, vacuum quod inane vocamus.

Praeterea per se quod cumque erit, aut faciet quid 440

aut aliis fungi debebit agentibus ipsum

aut erit ut possint in eo res esse gerique.

at facere et fungi sine corpore nulla potest res

nec praebere locum porro nisi inane vacansque.

ergo praeter inane et corpora tertia per se 445

nulla potest rerum in numero natura relinqui,

nec quae sub sensus cadat ullo tempore nostros

nec ratione animi quam quisquam possit apisci.

449 Nam quae cumque cluent, aut his coniuncta duabus

rebus ea invenies aut horum eventa videbis. 450

coniunctum est id quod nusquam sine peritiali

discidio potis est seiungi seque gregari,

pondus uti saxi, calor ignis, liquor aquae,

tactus corporibus cunctis, intactus inani.

servitium contra paupertas divitiaeque, 455

libertas bellum concordia cetera quorum

adventu manet incolumis natura abituque,

haec soliti sumus, ut par est, eventa vocare.

tempus item per se non est, sed rebus ab ipsis

consequitur sensus, transactum quid sit in aevo, 460

tum quae res instet, quid porro deinde sequatur;

nec per se quemquam tempus sentire fatendumst

semotum ab rerum motu placidaque quiete.

464 denique Tyndaridem raptam belloque subactas

Troiiugenas gentis cum dicunt esse, videndumst 465

ne forte haec per se cogant nos esse fateri,

quando ea saecula hominum, quorum haec eventa fuerunt,

inrevocabilis abstulerit iam praeterita aetas;

namque aliud terris, aliud regionibus ipsis

eventum dici poterit quod cumque erit actum. 470

denique materies si rerum nulla fuisset

nec locus ac spatium, res in quo quaeque geruntur,

numquam Tyndaridis forma conflatus amore

ignis Alexandri Phrygio sub pectore gliscens

clara accendisset saevi certamina belli 475

nec clam durateus Troiiianis Pergama partu

inflammasset equos nocturno Graiiugenarum;

perspicere ut possis res gestas funditus omnis

non ita uti corpus per se constare neque esse

nec ratione cluere eadem qua constet inane, 480

sed magis ut merito possis eventa vocare

corporis atque loci, res in quo quaeque gerantur.

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## Post by "Cassius" of May 20, 2022 at 7:31 AM

So to repeat several observations that seem to be very important:

(1) Only atoms have "eternal and unchanging properties." [Thus there are no eternal Platonic forms or Aristotelian "essences" that give existence to things.] Void itself is also eternal and unchanging, but only has the one property of giving space for atoms to exist and move in. Atoms and void exist because we can infer their existence through sensation about things (bodies) that we do sense.

(2) Bodies are composed of atoms and void from which arises "emergent qualities." These qualities are determined by "events" - the combinations of the properties of the atoms and the circumstances around them and under which they combine. These events and the emergent qualities they produce are not eternal and unchanging, but they do exist, and continue to exist so long as the circumstances that produced them remain the same. And key comment from Lucretius 418 as to how essential it is to acknowledge this, and how nothing else can make sense unless we accept what is right in front of us: *"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."*

(3) We live and experience sensation in the world of "events" which produce "emergent qualities" which do exist so long as the circumstances that produced them remain the same. Our world is real to us and is all that we have, despite the fact that at root everything emerges

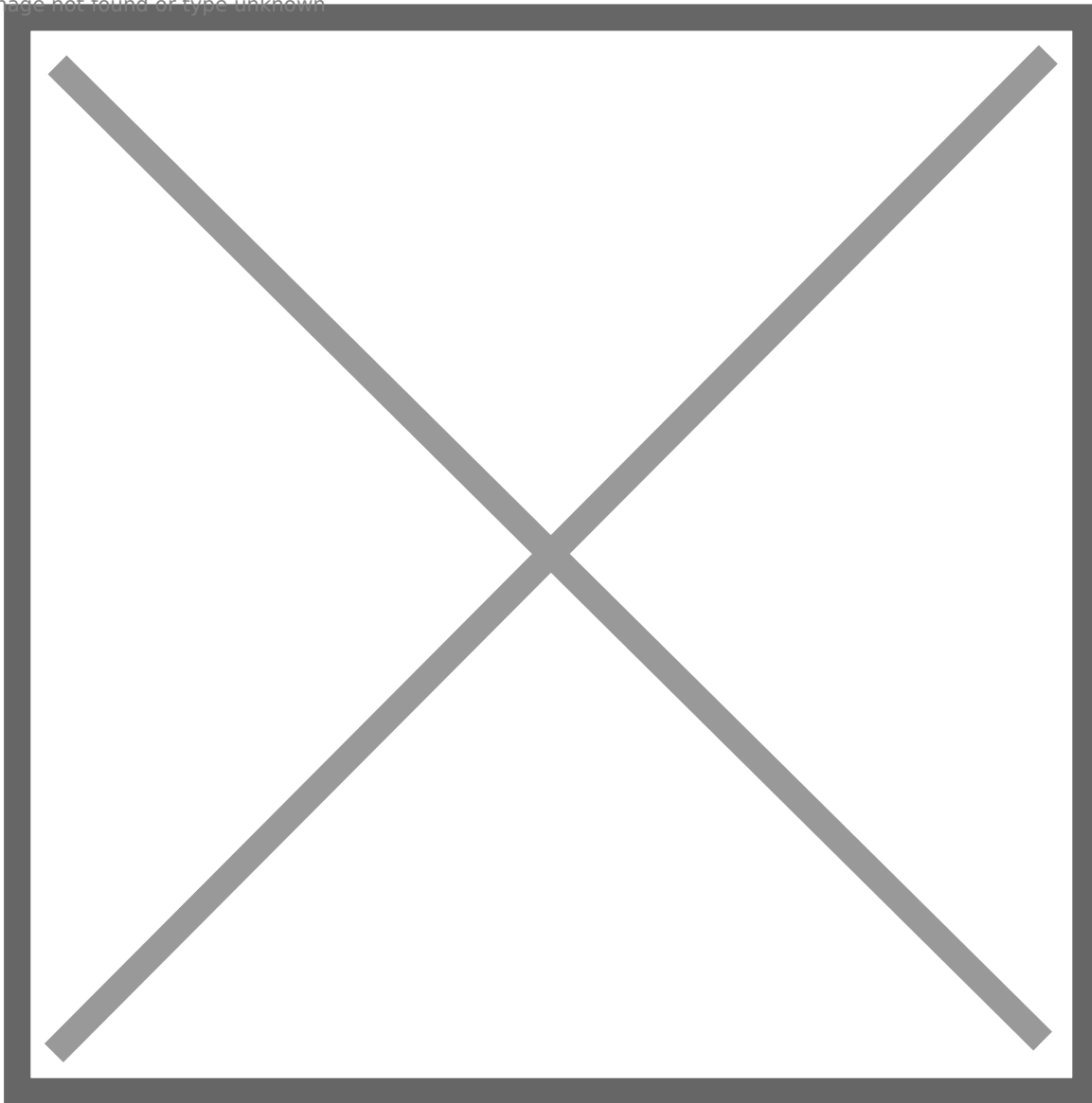
from atoms and void.

(4) None of this which is being discussed is "unfortunate" or a "mishap" or "accidental" in the modern English sense. All of this is the basis for the nature of things, for which the proper attitude is: **“Thanks be to blessed Nature because she has made what is necessary easy to supply, and what is not easy unnecessary.” U469 Johannes Stobaeus, *Anthology*, XVII.23**

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**Post by “Don” of May 20, 2022 at 8:13 AM**

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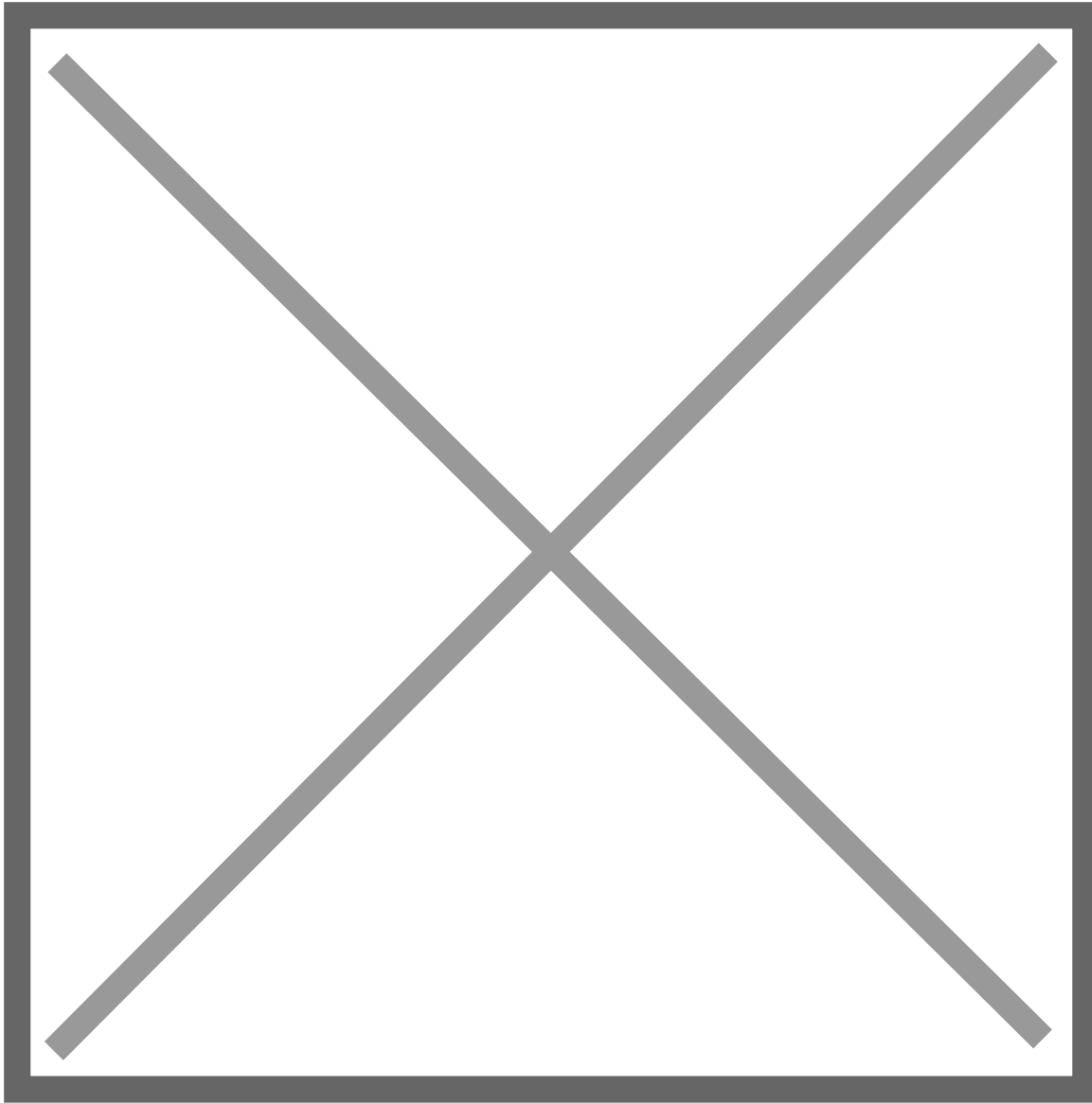


[accident | Etymology, origin and meaning of accident by etymonline](#)

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/2516-episode-one-hundred-twenty-two-letter-to-herodotus-10-what-it-means-to-exist-pro/>

ACCIDENT Meaning: "an occurrence, incident, event; what comes by chance," from Old French accident (12c.), from Latin... See definitions of accident.

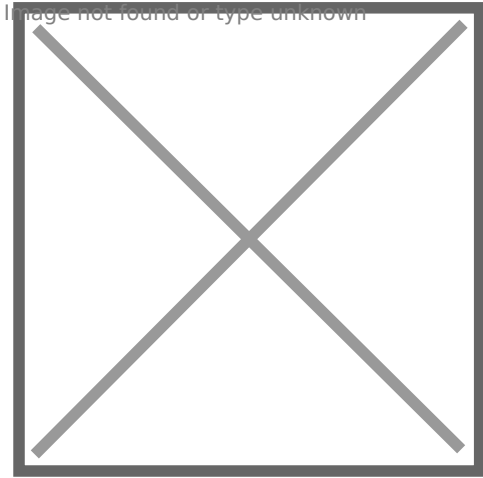
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ACCIDENCE Meaning: "non-essential or incidental characteristic," also "part of grammar dealing with inflection" (mid-15c.),... See definitions of accidence.

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### Definition of ACCIDENT

an unforeseen and unplanned event or circumstance; lack of intention or necessity : chance; an unfortunate event resulting especially from carelessness or...

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3. : a nonessential property or quality of an entity or circumstance

the accident of nationality