

Welcome Remikit!

Post by "Cassius" of March 25, 2023 at 8:40 PM

Welcome [remikit](#) !

Note: In order to minimize spam registrations, all new registrants must respond in this thread to this welcome message within 72 hours of its posting, or their account is subject to deletion. All that is required is a "Hello!" but of course we hope you will introduce yourself -- tell us a little about yourself and what prompted your interest in Epicureanism -- and/or post a question.

This forum is the place for students of Epicurus to coordinate their studies and work together to promote the philosophy of Epicurus. Please remember that all posting here is subject to our [Community Standards / Rules of the Forum](#) our [Not Neo-Epicurean, But Epicurean](#) and our [Posting Policy](#) statements and [associated posts](#).

Please understand that the leaders of this forum are well aware that many fans of Epicurus may have sincerely-held views of what Epicurus taught that are incompatible with the purposes and standards of this forum. This forum is dedicated exclusively to the study and support of people who are committed to classical Epicurean views. As a result, this forum is not for people who seek to mix and match some Epicurean views with positions that are inherently inconsistent with the core teachings of Epicurus.

All of us who are here have arrived at our respect for Epicurus after long journeys through other philosophies, and we do not demand of others what we were not able to do ourselves. Epicurean philosophy is very different from other viewpoints, and it takes time to understand how deep those differences really are. That's why we have membership levels here at the forum which allow for new participants to discuss and develop their own learning, but it's also why we have standards that will lead in some cases to arguments being limited, and even participants being removed, when the purposes of the community require it. Epicurean philosophy is not inherently democratic, or committed to unlimited free speech, or devoted to any other form of organization other than the pursuit by our community of happy living through the principles of Epicurean philosophy.

One way you can be most assured of your time here being productive is to tell us a little about yourself and personal your background in reading Epicurean texts. It would also be helpful if you could tell us how you found this forum, and any particular areas of interest that you have which would help us make sure that your questions and thoughts are addressed.

In that regard we have found over the years that there are a number of key texts and references which most all serious students of Epicurus will want to read and evaluate for themselves. Those include the following.

1. ["Epicurus and His Philosophy"](#) by Norman DeWitt
2. [The Biography of Epicurus by Diogenes Laertius.](#) This includes the surviving letters of Epicurus, including those to [Herodotus](#), [Pythocles](#), and [Menoceus](#).
3. ["On The Nature of Things"](#) - by Lucretius (a poetic abridgement of Epicurus' "On Nature")
4. ["Epicurus on Pleasure"](#) - By Boris [Nikolsky](#)
5. The chapters on Epicurus in [Gosling and Taylor's "The Greeks On Pleasure."](#)
6. [Cicero's "On Ends" - Torquatus Section](#)
7. [Cicero's "On The Nature of the Gods" - Velleius Section](#)
8. The Inscription of Diogenes of Oinoanda - [Martin Ferguson Smith translation](#)
9. [A Few Days In Athens" - Frances Wright](#)
10. Lucian Core Texts on Epicurus: (1) [Alexander the Oracle-Monger](#), (2) [Hermodotimus](#)
11. [Philodemus "On Methods of Inference"](#) (De Lacy version, including his appendix on relationship of Epicurean canon to Aristotle and other Greeks)
12. "The Greeks on Pleasure" -Gosling & Taylor Sections on Epicurus, especially the [section on katastematic and kinetic pleasure](#) which explains why ultimately this distinction was not of great significance to Epicurus.

It is by no means essential or required that you have read these texts before participating in the forum, but your understanding of Epicurus will be much enhanced the more of these you have read. Feel free to join in on one or more of our conversation threads under various topics found throughout the forum, where you can to ask questions or to add in any of your insights as you study the Epicurean philosophy.

And time has also indicated to us that if you can find the time to read one book which will best explain [classical Epicurean philosophy](#), as opposed to most modern "eclectic" interpretations of Epicurus, that book is Norman DeWitt's ***Epicurus And His Philosophy***.

(If you have any questions regarding the usage of the forum or finding info, please post any questions in this thread).

Welcome to the forum!

Not Neo-Epicurean, But Epicurean

1. Not "flourishing," "human potential," "self-actualization," or "meaningfulness," but happiness grounded in the feeling of pleasure.
2. Not "absence of pain" as a full statement of the goal of life, but "the Feelings are two, pleasure and pain" and "Pleasure is the beginning and the end of a happy life."
3. Not virtue for the sake of virtue, but virtue as instrumental for the attainment of pleasure.
4. Not "the greatest good for the greatest number," but "Every desire must be confronted with this question: What will happen to me if the object of my desire is accomplished and what if it is not?"
5. Not "humanism," "transhumanism," "individualism," "collectivism," "egoism," "altruism," "social progress," "Marxism," "democracy," "tyranny," or any "one size fits all" political ideal of any kind, but social structure based on friendship which "is formed and maintained by means of a community of life among those who have reached the fullness of pleasure."
6. Not "hard determinism," but "some things happen from necessity, some from chance, and others through our own choice."
7. Not "supernaturalism," but "materialism."
8. Not "supernatural gods," or "life after death," but confidence in a fully material universe and "for those men for whom wisdom is possible, and who do seek it, such men may truly live as gods."
9. Not only "short term hedonism," but "it is to continuous pleasures that I invite you."
10. Not "rationalism," but "all reason is dependent upon sensations."
11. Not fearful of death nor careless of losing life, but valuing life for the opportunity of pleasure it brings.

Our Posting Policy At EpicureanFriends.com:

"No Partisan Politics," "No Supernatural Religion," and "No Absolute Virtue"

This forum is dedicated to promoting the philosophy of Epicurus, and not to any partisan political positions whether "left", "right", or "center". The task of rediscovering Epicurean philosophy requires that such discussions be held elsewhere. Posts violating this rule are subject to removal.



Epicurean philosophy firmly rejects the viewpoint that there are any supernatural forces or absolute virtues or Platonic ideals of any kind. Argument which is based on supernatural claims, or "absolute" virtues or ideals of any kind, are in violation of this rule and subject to removal.

There are no
supernatural
gods



There is
no life
after death

All good
and evil exists
in sensation

Pleasure is
the beginning
and the end of
the blessed life

•

Post by “remikit” of March 26, 2023 at 9:49 PM

Thank you!

I found the forum after reading an articles on Aeon about Epicureanism.
https://psyche.co/guides/how-to-...IST_EMAIL_ID%5D

I was intrigued by the article and it reminded me of a long ago college read for a Victorian Lit class - Marius the Epicurean, written by Walter Pater - <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Marius-the-Epicurean>.

I would like to learn more and read more. Thanks for the welcome.

Post by “Kalosyni” of March 27, 2023 at 9:32 AM

[remikit](#) Welcome to the forum! 😊

[Quote from remikit](#)

I was intrigued by the article and it reminded me of a long ago college read for a Victorian Lit class - *Marius the Epicurean*, written by Walter Pater

Thanks, I wasn't familiar with that, and I found *Marius the Epicurean* [on Wikipedia](#), and after skimming through it I can see that it is very different than how we here on the forum understand Epicureanism. *Marius the Epicurean* has too much emphasis on asceticism (and looks to be heavily influenced by Platonism and Stoicism also). I would advise that you set any past recollection aside and start afresh.

Our take on pleasure as the goal is open to everything so long as it doesn't cause harm or harm others. So while asceticism could be pleasurable for some people, it is not in the least bit the goal or the path for every Epicurean.

My own understanding of Epicureanism: remember to seize the day, not recklessly but always in a manner which results in the best outcome. I base my choices or avoidances on what will bring an outcome of pleasure for a "sweet life". Cultivate friendships -- the importance of having supportive friends who also have this same way of navigating the world.

Here is a presentation by [Cassius](#), giving an overview you might find helpful:

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=fobzlg-x6s0>

And you may enjoy [A Few Days in Athens](#), a fictionalized account of a young philosophy student in the time of Epicurus.

And feel free to ask questions 😊

Post by “Cassius” of March 27, 2023 at 10:09 AM

At some point (hopefully soon) we should set up a separate post to highlight the different approaches between Pater's "Marius The Epicurean" and Frances Wright's "A Few Days In Athens." Both books are devoted in part to pointing out problems with Stoicism, but in much different ways. (Two prior threads on *Marius the Epicurean* here at EF are [here](#) and [here](#).)

The Wikipedia article on *Marius* says "***In particular Pater is careful in the novel to distinguish between 'hedonism', as usually understood, and Marius's cerebral, ascetic version of Epicureanism.***"

This is really the source of the problem with Pater's book -- he does not appreciate the distinction that Emily Austin expresses well in her book and articles that, as

Diogenes Laertius said - "[Epicurus] differs from the Cyrenaics with regard to pleasure. They do not include under the term the pleasure which is a state of rest, but only that which consists in motion. Epicurus admits both; also pleasure of mind as well as of body, as he states in his work *On Choice and Avoidance* and in that *On the Ethical End*, and in the first book of his work *On Human Life* and in the epistle to his philosopher friends in Mytilene."

In contrast to Marius, France Wright's *A Few Days In Athens* focuses very strongly on the actual doctrines of Epicurus and explains how prudent hedonism does not lead to asceticism, but to a complete understanding of how the pursuit of pleasure fits into a philosophy in which happiness is the acknowledged goal, rather than wrestling endlessly with the essentially theistic view of life. Also from the wikipedia article on Marius:

"His epiphany in the Sabine Hills, where he sensed a "divine companion" and the existence of a Platonic "Eternal Reason" or Cosmic Mind, is not a prelude to religious faith, though it continues to comfort him."

In the case of Pater's view of Epicurus, "...the novel remains open-ended, leaving us with a provisional ideal of 'aesthetic humanism' while bringing Marius, intuitively if not intellectually, to a Christian end."

In the case of Frances Wright's view of Epicurus, the novel ends with a strong and unwavering attack on the religious supernatural perspective as essentially the ultimate source of evil in the world.

Quote from *A Few Days In Athens*

"Under all these forms and varieties of the external and internal man, still, with hardly an exception, I have found him unhappy. With more capacity for enjoyment than any other creature, I have seen him surpassing the rest of existences only in suffering and crime. "Why is this and from whence? A master error, for some there must be, leads to results so fatal — so opposed to the apparent nature and promise of things? Long have I sought this error — this main-spring of human folly and human crime. I have traced, through

all their lengthened train of consequents and causes, human practice and human theory; I have threaded the labyrinth to its dark beginning; I have found the first link in the chain of evil; I have found it — in all countries — among all tribes and tongues and nations; I have found it, — fellow-men, I have found it in — RELIGION!”

So reading and comparing Marius to "A Few Days In Athens" can be eye-opening.

<http://www.Afewdaysinathens.com>

Post by “Martin” of March 27, 2023 at 11:17 AM

Welcome Remikit!

Post by “remikit” of March 28, 2023 at 7:43 PM

Thank you for the welcome and the link to A Few Days in Athens! I'll go check it out.