

Great blog post by Bart Ehrman on Awareness of Our Death

Post by “Don” of August 2, 2023 at 8:17 AM

<https://ehrmanblog.org/preparing-for-that-final-trip-what-do-you-think/>

Post by “Cassius” of August 2, 2023 at 8:32 AM

In case the topic isn't clear from the link -

Quote

Wow-“the motorized trundle through the crematorium’s curtains.” What really wrenched my attention was the thought that one sometimes has: that’s really going to happen. There will be a time when my body will be sent to the incinerator, and I am no more. My body will be burned (or if you prefer the long-term approach, it will eventually decay; and if it doesn’t decay, it’ll be incinerated anyway when the sun blows up). And life will go on anyway (well, until the sun blows up). People will mourn. People will get on with their lives. The sun will still rise. Sports will still be played. The storms will still come. Nations will rise and fall. Our children will grow old and die. And then their children. And then their grandchildren. And soon, no matter how important or unimportant we seem to be to the world, we will be completely forgotten. And then *that* generation will come and go. And so it will happen. It happened to our parents; to our grandparents; to our great-grandparents; to all the way back. And it will happen to us, each of us, individually, one at a time. It will happen to me, with the motorized trundle through the crematorium’s curtains.

Post by “Don” of August 2, 2023 at 8:34 AM

But more importantly...

Quote

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3232-great-blog-post-by-bart-ehrman-on-awareness-of-our-death/>

For me, these thoughts completely relativize everything I do. And they make me appreciate the good things I have and the life that I lead, life itself, so precious to me. They don't make me despair or turn nihilist. They make me love existence and want to do more to help others love it.

Post by “Don” of August 2, 2023 at 9:38 AM

[Quote from Cassius](#)

In case the topic isn't clear from the link -

Good point.... Edited the thread title. Thanks!

Post by “Joshua” of August 2, 2023 at 10:51 AM

I was reading *Macbeth* last night and was struck by these lines (written about an executed traitor, but never the less);

Nothing in his life

Became him like the leaving it. He died

As one that had been studied in his death

To throw away the dearest thing he [owned]

As 'twere a careless trifle.

To be a student of one's own mortality, and neither dreading the day nor wishing for it, is a consistent theme in Epicurean texts.

Post by “Godfrey” of August 2, 2023 at 3:24 PM

Quote from Don

But more importantly...

Quote

Quote For me, these thoughts completely relativize everything I do. And they make me appreciate the good things I have and the life that I lead, life itself, so precious to me. They don't make me despair or turn nihilist. They make me love existence and want to do more to help others love it.

This is so interesting to me, and I totally agree with the sentiment.

Recently I had a relaxed, wide-ranging conversation with a neighborhood acquaintance and we got onto the topic of philosophy. I mentioned how the idea that we experience nothing after our death gives me great comfort. He responded, while noticeably tensing up, that an afterlife was "a line in the sand" for him: he couldn't consider any philosophy as legitimate that didn't include an afterlife. Unfortunately the conversation moved on and I never got back to follow up on this idea.

He and I both retired about the same time, and both got into thinking about "the big issues" at that time. He began a deep dive into his background of secular Judaism, which certainly influences his view on the subject. We both have visceral reactions to death, yet in such different ways.

Post by "Joshua" of August 2, 2023 at 6:26 PM

That is a fascinating story, Godfrey.

Quote

He responded, while noticeably tensing up, that an afterlife was "a line in the sand" for him: he couldn't consider any philosophy as legitimate that didn't include an afterlife.

I also have a line in the sand, which I have called "the principle of the cockroach"; any account of humanity and its fate that fails to take into account other species of animal (of which we are one) must necessarily be incomplete.